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ABSTRACT

These six issues contain the following articles: "The Bright Side of the U.S. Teacher Shortage" (Thomas Nixon); "Sharing Power in the Classroom" (Patricia Richard-Amato); "Content for Conversation Partners" (Kathleen Olson); "English Language Teaching in Indonesia" (Bachrudin Musthafa); "Working to Make a Difference: Interview with Dr. James Alatis" (Marilyn Rosenthal); "From Lessons to Life: Authentic Materials Bridge the Gap" (Maria Spelleri); "TESOL's P-12 Teacher Education Standards are Here!" (Candace Harper); "Who am I? Issues of Language, Culture and Identity for Native Americans" (William Demmert); "Evaluating and Choosing ESL Software" (Joy Egbert and Gina Petrie); "Teaching Writing using Peer Feedback Checklists" (Clare Furneaux); "New Ways of Using Video Technology in English Language Teaching" (Naomi Migliacci); "English Teaching in Mexico" (Denise Salazar); "Kagan Structures for English Language Learners" (Spencer Kagan and Julie High); "NCELA Spells RESOURCE!" (Patricia Anne DiCerbo); "Teaching Vocabulary for Peace Education" (Francisco Gomes de Matos); "English Teaching in Argentina" (Blanca Arazi); "Steps to Success for Academic Readers" (Jean Zukowski/Faust); "Creating Cross-Cultural Connections" (Shelley Fairbairn); "Combining ESL and Job Training" (Stephaney Jones-Vo); "English Teaching in Taiwan" (Johanna Katchen); "Language, Culture and the Feature Film" (Hans Straub); "Teaching English in Francophone Senegal" (Kay Davis); "Creating Placement Tests" (Joel Murray); and "Evolution: It's Not Just for Biology" (Richard Firsten). The journals also contain letters to the editor, news briefs, conference calendars, reviews, catalogs, and columns. (SM)

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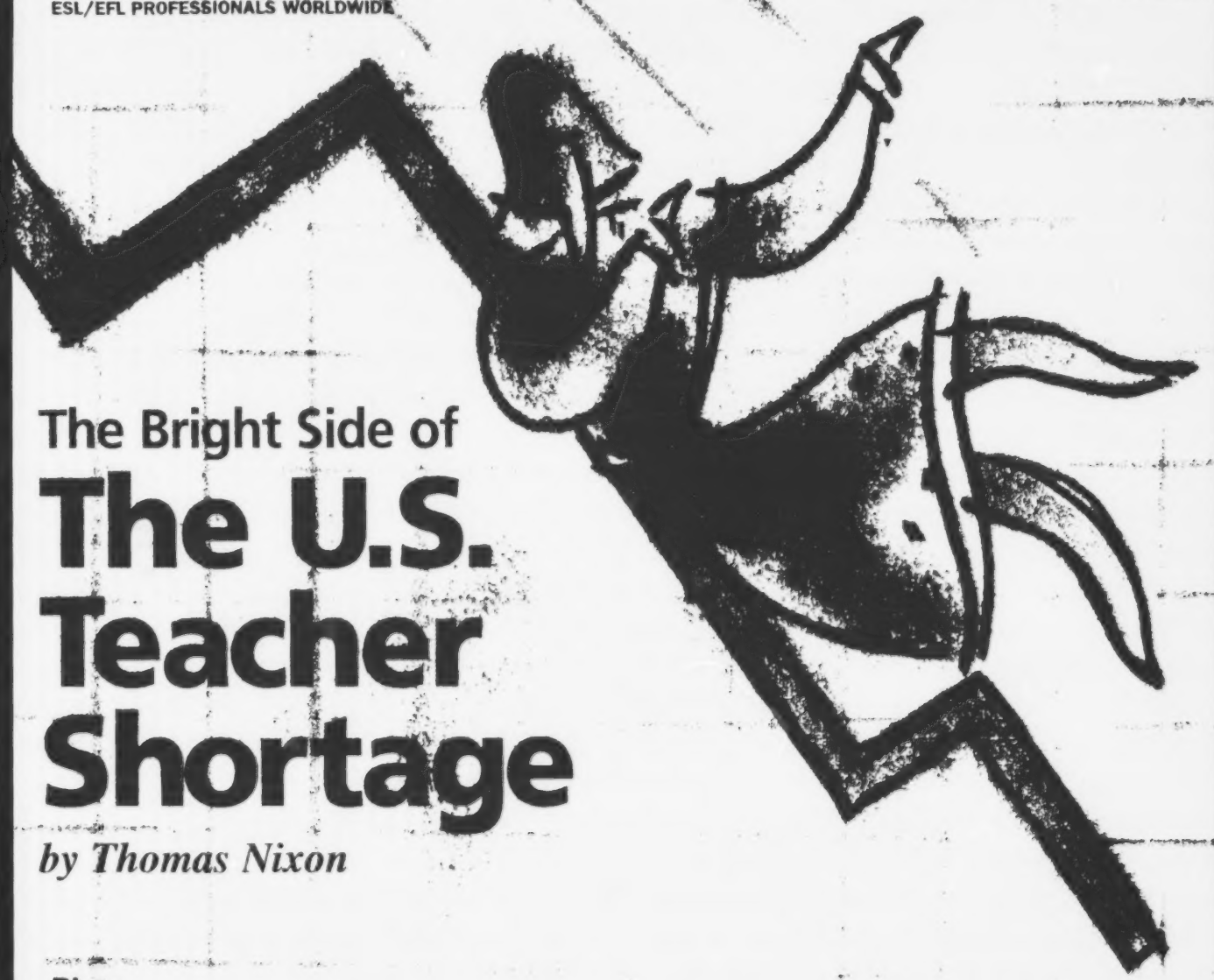
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FEATURES

The Bright Side of the U.S. Teacher Shortage

by Thomas Nixon 10✓

Sharing Power in the Classroom

by Patricia Richard-Amato 16✓

Content for Conversation Partners

by Kathleen Olson 22✓

English Language Teaching in Indonesia

by Bachrudin Musthafa 26✓

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Note 4

Letters to the Editor 5

News Briefs 6

Conference Calendar 7

Reviews 20

Catalog Showcase 30

COLUMNS

Christine Meloni's Networky 8

Joy Egbert's Technology 14

Richard Firsten, The Grammar Guy 19

Thomas Nixon's Employment Focus 29



Page 10



Page 16



Page 22

Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?



Jason Snow, Susan Maupin, Mark Marsing (coordinator), Mindy Rich, Trudy Elsmore, Chris Beyke, and Mary Winters. ESL staff of Granite Community School, Salt Lake City, UT, which offers ESL, high school completion, and other courses for adults.

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Page 26



Is there an ESL teacher shortage in the U.S.?

Is there shortage of teachers in the United States? More specifically, is there a shortage of qualified teachers to serve English language learners? We asked our online visitors (www.eslmag.com) whether or not there is a shortage of qualified ESL teachers in their school districts. Seventy-nine percent said, "yes." Thomas Nixon has done some digging to find out whether or not there is a shortage of ESL teachers, who is doing the teaching in areas affected by the shortage, and what the shortage might mean to you professionally.

Patricia Richard-Amato, a name well-known and respected in the field of English as a second language, talks about teachers sharing power with students in the classroom. Now, sharing power doesn't mean teachers can turn over the class to the students and go get coffee. It means, among other things, designing instruction so that students are more active in their own learning from beginning to end. What better way to prepare students for life beyond the classroom?

What's the secret to being a good conversationalist? Asking good questions is part of it. The same is true for successful conversation partners—native English speakers who spend time conversing with English language learners to help them learn English. Kathleen Olson provides content guidelines that should make each conversation partner meeting enjoyable and productive.

Indonesia is an amazingly diverse place!—so many islands across so many miles, so many people from so many ethnic groups. Bachrudin Musthafa explains how both the diversity and unity of Indonesia are maintained with languages—English in the national school curriculum is one unifying factor. He also describes the interesting challenges and achievements of Indonesia's English teachers.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal
Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

6



The magazine for English as a
Second Language professionals.

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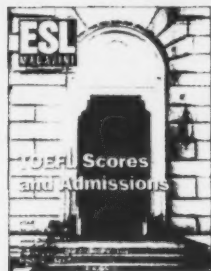
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 Include your name and position or address.

Using TOEFL Scores

► Thanks for the article about the TOEFL (Nov/Dec 2001). I have occasionally been asked to teach TOEFL preparation courses at our university in Indonesia. I am often surprised by the relatively high scores that my students are able to obtain on the TOEFL when in a classroom situation their communicative English is not sufficient for American university level coursework. Occasionally someone who does demonstrate competence in

their English language skill scores relatively poorly on the test because they weren't aware of the "tricks" inherent in the examination process. I believe that a better indicator of communicative competence would be through essay or oral/phone interview. The interviews could be conducted by EFL teachers in the various countries and recommendations made to specific universities. I think that it's high time that universities address this issue.

—LORI MORAN
 University of Siliwangi
 Tasikmalaya, Indonesia

Book Clubs

► As a reading teacher in a public school with a large ESL population, I was excited to see the article on ESL book clubs in the Nov/Dec issue of *ESL Magazine*. Book clubs for adults have certainly become popular throughout the U.S. in the past decade. What a wonderful opportuni-

ty they afford adult ESL students to expand their understanding of English vocabulary and American culture. The format and structure of the book clubs seems to be clear and specific but open-ended enough to provide opportunity for rich and meaningful discussions. Thank you for featuring information on this authentic and engaging program.

—GENIE BOYD
 Annapolis, MD

English in Egypt

► Thank you for the excellent article on teaching English in Egypt. In a time when some Eastern countries are scaling back their commitment to educating people for a shrinking world, it is encouraging to hear about this vigorous effort. Too bad American schools don't always have the same attitude toward other languages of the world.

—JEAN SMITH
 Phoenix, AZ

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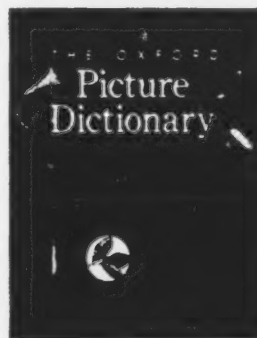
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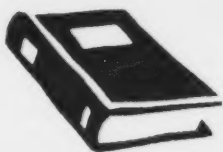
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New Textbook Plan to Help English Language Learners in CA

The California State Board of Education has adopted regular classroom textbooks that include strategies intended to meet the instructional needs of English language learners in grades K-8. It is hoped that the K-8 English-Language Arts textbook programs will ensure that English learners in California's public schools have equal access to the state's English-Language Arts academic content standards. California is the first state to require all K-8 basic instructional programs to include materials that can be used by regular classroom teachers to teach grade-level content standards to English learners while they attempt to attain English-language proficiency. The textbook adoption has been opposed by bilingual education advocates and others who feel that these texts are inadequate for meeting the needs of English language learners. There are 1.2 million English language learners in grades K-8 in California.



New Online Resource Guides

Visit <http://www.cal.org/> to find new online resource guides from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Language and Linguistics including "English Language Learners with Special Needs," "Creating Web-Based Language Learning Activities," "Language Policy and Planning," and "Second Language Teaching Methodology."

"No Child Left Behind Act" Revamps Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

On January 8 President Bush reauthorized the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by signing the "No Child Left Behind Act," which Congress passed in December. The law mandates greater accountability for student progress from state and local educational agencies by requiring student testing in reading and math each year in grades three through eight. It increases the flexibility and control of state and local school districts by allowing discretionary spending of up to half of their federal education dollars. It provides federal support for students to transfer out of low-performing or unsafe schools. It requires states to provide parents with annual report cards of school performance and teacher qualifications. It promotes research-based methods of reading instruction with the goal that all children read at or above grade level by third grade. It promotes the training and retention of quality teachers. The reforms are supported by federal funding increases to more than \$22.1 billion for elementary and secondary schools, a 27 percent increase over last year's funding.

Title III addresses "Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students" and empha-

How School Leaders Can Promote Harmony within Diversity

Leading for Diversity: How School Leaders Can Improve Interethnic Relations, a CREDE educational practice report by Rosemary Henze (2001), describes how school leaders address racial or ethnic conflicts effectively, create positive interethnic environments, and promote relationships among diverse groups and individuals. The report is based on 21 case studies in schools across the United States that have highly diverse student populations. Principals and other school leaders can learn from this report how to make their schools places where students feel safe and respect one another while getting a good education. <http://www.crede.ucsc.edu>

Making Information Available about English Language Learners in NYC

The Board of Education of the City of New York has published a "Facts and Figures 2000-2001" booklet that answers frequently asked questions about English language learners (ELLs) and the bilingual/ESL programs of the City of New York. The booklet includes information about how ELLs are identified, where their numbers are concentrated in New York City, what linguistic assets they bring to classrooms and who are those with interrupted formal education. For more information or to obtain a copy, call 718-935-3911 or e-mail evega@nycboe.net.

sizes accountability, local control, and parental options. The new legislation requires testing in English for LEP students who have been in the United States for three consecutive years, and requires states to monitor the progress of LEP students in meeting the states' established English proficiency and academic objectives. The new law also requires the recipients of funds under Title III to inform parents of LEP students of instructional options for their children, and to allow parental choice in school programs offered. Title III also address the disbursing of funds and provides for a National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs "to collect, analyze, synthesize, and disseminate information on effective programs for limited English proficient students."

The "No Child Left Behind Act" also redesignates the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) as the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students.



Adult ESL in the New Millennium— Symposium Proceedings Available

The proceedings of the symposium "Adult ESL in the New Millennium" sponsored by the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) and held at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in February, 2001 are now available online. The proceedings describe trends, progress, and challenges in adult ESL education. Presentation titles include:

- "The Learner Population in Adult ESL Programs."
- "U.S. Department of Education English Literacy/Civics Education Projects."
- "Rights of Immigrant Adults in the U.S. Workforce," "Instructional Strategies for English Language Learners with Limited Literacy Skills."
- "English Language Learners With Learning Disabilities"
- "Professional Development and Working Conditions of Adult Education Teachers."

The symposium webpage (www.cal.org/ncle/millennium.htm) describes the need for the panel discussions: "Nearly 4 million adults were enrolled in adult education classes in the United States in 1999. Of those, 47% (or 1,695,516 adults) enrolled in ESL programs that received funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). Given this large population of English language learners, the need to examine the quality and structures of adult ESL instruction and to improve our programs and teaching strategies is timely and necessary." The website also provides a list of additional resources regarding the topics addressed.

Updated NCBE Glossary

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) has posted an updated glossary of terms related to the education of linguistically and culturally diverse learners: www.ncbe.gwu.edu/askncbe/faqs/index.htm.

Conference Calendar

January

- 3-6 **Linguistic Society of America**, San Francisco, CA. Contact Margaret Reynolds, 202-835-1714.
- 23-25 **Asociacion Costarricense de Profesores de Ingles**, San Jose, Costa Rica. Contact Elieth Matamores, elieth-m@hotmail.com.

February

- 11 **TESL Manitoba**, Winnipeg, MB. Contact Tony Tavares, 204-945-6879.
- 21-23 **BC TEAL**, Vancouver, BC. Contact bcteal@vcn.bc.ca.

March

- 2 **Hawai'i TESOL**, Honolulu, HI. Contact reiss@flex.com.
- 7-9 **Georgetown University Round Table on Language and Linguistics**, Wash., DC. gurt@georgetown.edu.
- 7-9 **Southwest Conference On Language Teaching**, Oklahoma City, OK. Contact 775-358-6943.
- 14-17 **California TESOL**, San Francisco, CA. Contact Kathy Sherak, 415-338-7382.
- 15-17 **TESOL-SPAIN**, Madrid, Spain. Contact holly.vass@wanadoo.es.

- 19-23 **National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)**, Philadelphia, PA. 202-898-1829.

- 20-22 **TESOL Arabia**, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Contact Zafar Syed, zsyed@mli.ac.ae.

- 24-27 **IATEFL**, York, UK. Contact IATEFL@compuserve.com.

- 26-30 **The Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO)**, Davis, CA. info@calico.org.

April

- 6-9 **American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL)**, Salt Lake City, UT. Contact 612-953-0805.

- 9-13 **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)**, Salt Lake City, UT. Contact 703-836-0774.

- 25-27 **Arizona TESOL**, Tucson, AZ. Contact Sarah Kim, 520-621-2698.

May

- 16-18 **TESL Canada**, Regina, SK. scenes@sk.sympatico.ca.
- 17-19 **Venezuela TESOL**, Margarita, Venezuela. Contact Natalia McCarthy, natiamccarthy@cantv.net.

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“Poessays” Online

The word “poessay” at first glance looks like a mistake, but in truth it is a neologism derived from “poem” and “essay.” This new literary form was created by John Pereira, a former journalist and freelance language teacher/textbook writer who has been teaching EFL at the college-level and living in Japan for 23 years. Pereira describes the poessay: “On the one hand, it is poetry to be appreciated for its sounds, rhythm, dramatic impact, and imagery. On the other, it contains a flowing message, an insightful opinion, or a rhetorical argument that is usually expressed in linear prose.” To get a better understanding of the concept, read the two poessays on the right written by Japanese students of English.

Pereira has created an online newsletter called *Communicative Times* where he publishes the poessays of Japanese university students. At press time, six issues were available, the latest being Autumn 2001. On the home page of this website (<http://www.kyoto-seika.ac.jp/ct/CT/tlt.html>) Pereira and two of his colleagues,

Clone

*The scientist
who produced
the clone
said*

*this is
the smartest man
in the world*

*He is
a genius*

*True
but
does he
know
his mother's
name?*

—Asuka Matsumiya

Moon

*The moon
changes
every night*

*half moon
full moon
crescent moon
and
new moon*

*But
no
the moon
is
always
a full moon*

*Are
we also
like
the
moon?*

—Yumiko Toguchi

Simon Potter and Wayne Johnson, outline the pedagogic uses of the poessay. They suggest uses both in English writing and in oral communication classes. It is an intriguing form and likely to appeal to students because it is not as intimidating as either a poem or an essay.

The Web is an excellent vehicle for displaying student work. Students can become very motivated when they realize that they have a potentially limitless audience. Pereira welcomes submissions of poessays from English language students from anywhere in the world. Take a look at the site and then encourage your students to write a poessay. The *Communicative Times* could be an appealing site for them.

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She can be reached at cfmeloni@hotmail.com. Please write “Networthy” in the subject of e-mail messages. This and past columns can be found online at www.eslmag.com/articles.html.

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TESOL Session

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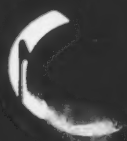


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The Bright Side of the U.S. Teacher Shortage

BY THOMAS NIXON

We need...many more teachers well-versed in teaching English as a second language. Our teachers need to...be prepared to teach all of America's children—the gifted and the talented, our many new immigrants, the college-bound achiever, and the disabled child who is learning so much more because he or she is now included.—Former Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley (1997)

Is there a teacher shortage in the United States? We hear about it on the television news and read about it in newspapers. It is discussed at conferences and at the highest levels of government. And, if there is a teacher shortage, how does it affect ESL teachers?

Let's start with what might be considered bad news for many ESL teachers: There is no teacher shortage for full-time positions teaching ESL to adults—college students, refugees, recent immigrants, and so on. This is not to say that there aren't many positions available, but most of those are part-time in nature. Likely this is not a surprise to most of us who have worked in the field for more than a year or two.

In a recent online discussion concerning the teacher shortage (TESLJB-L, an ESL jobs listserv), it was clear that many teachers, ESL and otherwise, have very strong opinions as to whether or not a shortage of teachers (ESL and otherwise) exists. Statistics seem to indicate that a teacher shortage exists only at the K-12 level, but not across the board—only in some subjects and only in some areas.

In that same online discussion, Karen Stanley, an ESL instructor at

Central Piedmont Community College, discussed her local K-12 situation. "In Charlotte, North Carolina (USA) there is definitely a K-12 teacher shortage, even in ESL. A fair number of instructors who have been teaching ESL at the college level or in adult education classes, and whose first choice was not to teach children, have nonetheless taken jobs in the public schools for the very good reason that they could get decent pay and benefits."

The K-12 shortage can be one of

Causes of the Shortage

It's not entirely clear why there is a shortage, but there are several contributing factors. The first is that getting enough teachers is a game of percentages. It is not only about making sure that there are more than enough students in teacher preparation programs. In actual numbers, there are enough teacher preparation students to fill all of the upcoming positions, but only if we can keep teachers from leaving the field. Also, inexplicably, a large number of students who complete these programs never enter teaching.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) asserts that twenty percent of all new teachers will leave the field within two years and, in urban districts, fifty percent of all new teachers will leave the field within five years. There are a number of reasons cited for this departure, but lack of administrative support, low salaries, and unreasonable expectations on the part of administrators, parents, and the public appear at the top of most lists.

As to salaries, according to the National Education Association, the average teacher salary during the 1999-2000 school year was \$41,724. Whether or not this

is low is certainly a matter of perspective, but compared to the salaries of others in professions requiring similar educational level and considering number of years on the job, it does seem low. An estimated six percent of those in the teaching profession leave the field for reasons other than retirement each year.



the better things to come along for ESL teachers who have not been able to secure full-time employment or who are unhappy with their current salary or benefits. Before getting into details as to how this teacher shortage can be of benefit to those who teach at other levels, let's first take a closer look at the shortage.

Where is the Shortage?

Even within public school education, there are only some areas where teachers are sorely needed. In addition to ESL and bilingual education, teachers are also needed in math, science, and special education. This is not to say that all places need all of these specialties, but many do.

NCES predicts in their report *Predicting the Need for Newly Hired Teachers in the U.S. to 2008-09* that "some 2.4 million teachers will be needed in the next eleven years." This number goes even higher after declining student/teacher ratios are factored in due to class-size reduction programs around the country.

Not surprisingly, the shortage is primarily in those places where it is most difficult to get teachers to work. When someone says that they are looking for an elementary or secondary teaching position, but they have only a very narrow area in which they are willing to work, this decreases the likelihood of their being able to secure a teaching position. If you live in southern California but are unwilling to apply to the Los Angeles Unified School District or if you live in New York but are unwilling to apply to the New York City Schools, this will make your K-12 job search much more difficult.

The teacher shortage is in the big cities and in very rural and poor areas. Not by coincidence, this is also where a

large percentage of the English language learners are located. The inner cities have always had difficulty in keeping teachers, but add a relatively low unemployment rate and this is made much worse. If you're looking for a K-12 teaching position, you should be looking at school districts in Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco, Chicago, and New York, as well as other large urban areas. Also, in areas that are typically classified as poor and rural (as opposed to just rural), the possibilities are good as well.

California: The Way of the Future?

One of the more difficult problems with determining whether or not there is a shortage specifically of ESL and bilingual education teachers is the different ways that states allow people to be certified. California, with its tremendous population of English language learners, has no ESL teacher certification. If a district has people who are called ESL or English language development (ELD) teachers, this is a district choice and the person could have a teaching credential in any subject area. Since California doesn't offer a credential in teaching English as a second language, the next closest credential would be in English. There is no state requirement, however, that an ELD teacher even have a credential or degree in English.

California has the Crosscultural,

Language, and Academic Development certificate (CLAD) that, in theory, trains all teachers in how to instruct English language learners. However, it appears to be more of a way not to have ESL teachers at all. There have been no definitive studies that have proven that this particular approach—everybody is an ESL teacher—works better than having ESL/ELD or bilingual education classrooms.

I have taught CLAD courses for California State University, Fresno, and I believe that it is good training for all teachers. This is particularly true in a state such as California where one out of every three students is an English language learner. It shouldn't, however, take the place of the dedicated ESL classroom. The quality of the English language teaching in most cases is just not adequate. What is the future of teaching English as a second language when every teacher becomes a language teacher and there are no thoroughly trained specialists?

Who is Doing the Teaching?

While the glut of ESL teachers wanting to teach university and community college students ensures a reasonable adherence to standards (i.e., a master's degree in the field), this is quite commonly not the case at the K-12 and adult education levels. While in adult education programs, you may have teachers with significant credentials in teaching ESL, it is also probable that

More Information about Fewer Teachers

■ There is "some shortage" or a "considerable shortage" in the supply of ESL teachers in nine of eleven regions in the United States, according to the 1999 report *Educator Supply and Demand in the United States* published by the American Association for Employment in Education.

■ According to the report *Urban Teacher Challenge: Teacher Demand and Supply in the Great City Schools* published in January of 2000, 68% of schools in the urban districts surveyed reported an immediate demand for ESL teachers. Seventy-three percent of have an immediate need for bilingual teachers. The report was published by Recruiting New Teachers, the Council of the Great City Schools and the Council of Great City Colleges of Education.

■ A list of "Designated Teacher Shortage Areas" is published online by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). Of the 37 states who submitted reports on teacher shortages, 14 reported a shortage of ESL and/or bilingual teachers (eight ESL and bilingual, four ESL only, two bilingual only) for 1999-2000 (the latest reports published). States reporting shortages of ESL or bilingual teachers include Arkansas, California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Texas and Wisconsin.

■ According to a study conducted in August 2001 among all of Oregon's public schools by the Oregon Quality Assurance in Teaching Program, during the past two years nearly half of Oregon's schools have had difficulty recruiting teachers, particularly in mathematics, science, languages, music, ESL, bilingual education, and special education.

■ In 2000, George Mason University Graduate School of Education received \$1.22 million from the U.S. DOE to fund the Bilingual Paraprofessional Career Ladder Project—a partnership between George Mason, Northern Virginia Community College, and three local school districts to address the critical shortage of ESL/bilingual teachers in Northern Virginia.

■ According to the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) Rural Advisory Council: State Status Reports in May 2000, "more than half of the states in the NCREL region indicated some challenge in recruiting and retaining quality staff....The teacher shortage in many states is actually a shortage of qualified specialized teachers...special education, ESL...math and science. In rural Wisconsin...the rising numbers of non-English speaking students is creating pressing new staffing demands."

you will have teachers with degrees in home economics, psychology, and industrial technology. Because adult education programs are most often run by K-12 school districts, many teachers will transfer from the K-12 side with little or no ESL experience or qualifications.

Given that there is a shortage of bilingual education and ESL teachers in our elementary and secondary schools, who is doing the teaching? The answer is not good. For the most part, it is people unqualified to be in the classroom. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future in their *Fact Sheet: On Teaching in America* provide some sobering statistics:

- ▶ Seventy-five percent of urban school districts admit that they hire teachers without proper qualifications;
- ▶ One-fourth of newly-hired teachers lack the proper qualifications for the job;
- ▶ Fifteen percent of all newly-hired teachers enter the classroom without having met state standards; and
- ▶ Two out of every five adults providing students with bilingual education are support staff and not qualified teachers.

And perhaps the most startling statistic of all:

- ▶ More than 12% of all newly hired teachers have no training at all.

The reality is that too many of the classroom teachers, particularly in urban areas, have little or no training. It should come as no surprise that many of these teachers with such little training are teaching a disproportionate number of our English language learners.

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education in its analysis of a study conducted by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) found that only a small percentage of universities and colleges even offer programs specifically geared toward preparing bilingual education teachers. In addition, they further assert that only one out of every six teacher preparation programs require coursework for mainstream teachers in how best to teach English language learners.

Opportunities for a Professional Transition

The one advantage to a teacher shortage is that it does open up positions for ESL teachers to transfer to different levels. Are you tired of being a "free-flyer" and working at several different schools in order to make a living? Consider this: Most public school districts pay better and provide better benefits than intensive English programs and other programs for adults. Public school teachers certainly are better compensated than adult part-timers. Also, given the statistics above, it is likely that you are more qualified than other candidates for K-12-based programs. Perhaps you haven't taught children, but you have experience teaching English language learners. This is more than many of the other candidates can claim.

Lesley Woodward of West Springfield High School in Massachusetts made the switch from teaching adult ESL to teaching "regular" high school English. She decided to switch levels because there were more opportunities available. Where she lives, English teachers are in short supply, so her school was quite happy to get someone who has an M.A. and an M.Ed. in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University. She also had lapsed certification in English/ESL. As to whether the current teacher shortage affected her job search, "Absolutely. I have taught ESL for years and was uncertain about teaching English again after so many years, but it's worked out."

The decision to take advantage of the teacher shortage worked out well for Barbara Gottschalk, an ESL teacher for Warren Consolidated Schools, Warren Michigan (located in the metro Detroit area). Anticipating a move to the Detroit area, Barbara wasn't specifically looking for a K-12 position. She had spent "ten happy years teaching in higher education and doing corporate language training." She needed something full-time with benefits. Her public school teaching experience and Detroit's need for English language teachers made things all come together for her. In terms of hoops to jump through for certification, because she had already held certification in another state, she only had to pass a certification test in her specialty (ESL) and a general education test.

So how can you use all this infor-

mation to your best advantage? If you work part-time in ESL at another level or are looking for a first teaching position at the K-12 level, this information could guide you into equally rewarding (or even more rewarding) work, but at a compensation level that matches your income needs.

Whatever your reasons for considering such a move, it appears that there could not be a better time to do so. Even if you would still rather teach adults, you may discover (as many have) that there is much to be said for teaching children. Also, in addition to this new-found position in the K-12 sector, it is still possible for you to teach as an adjunct in the evenings or on weekends. Not only will this supplement your income, but it could eventually lead to full-time employment at that level. You may decide, however, that you ultimately prefer teaching children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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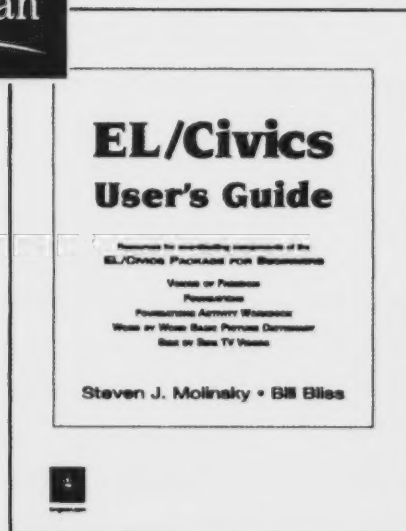
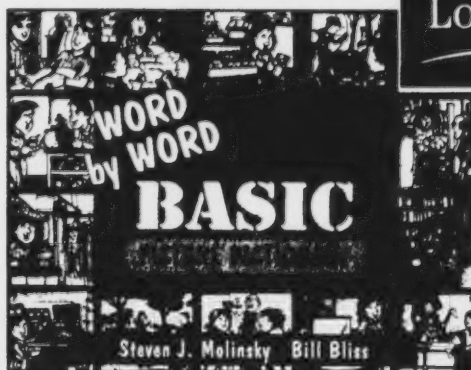
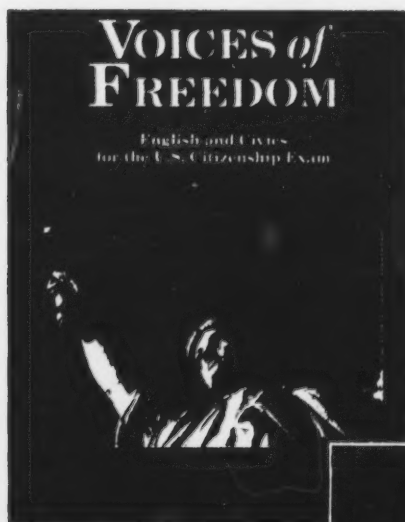
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New Technologies for Language Learning

This column is one in a series of four that describes new technologies that may affect the future of language learning. By "new" technologies I generally mean hardware and software that 1) is available but not yet ubiquitous in schools and language programs, 2) is under development and not yet widely available, or 3) has not yet been invented. The technologies presented below are available in schools both in the United States and abroad, but they are not yet used effectively in many language programs. The efficient and effective use of these technologies can support crucial language environment conditions in a variety of ways; it is important, however, for teachers to decide whether and when they are needed, rather than having them mandated by others. By being aware of what these technologies are and can do, language teachers can be better prepared to make these decisions.

Wireless Sub-notebooks: Without the restraint of wires, students can study any time, any place. Computer labs can be reconfigured as "beanbag chair classrooms" (Jessup, personal communication, November 2001) where students can choose a workspace that fits the task they are performing—from sitting in beanbag chairs to work individually to sitting around a table to interact with team members. This arrangement not only overcomes many of the hurdles in the typical computer lab but also facilitates interaction and many of the other language environment conditions, particularly an optimal stress atmosphere. An example of this type of hardware is the Sony Vaio Picturebook (<http://www.sony.com/goto-scl-vaio.html>).

Tablet PCs: For students studying "anytime, any place," the tablet-size computer may be just the ticket. Bigger than personal digital assistants (PDA) but without the keyboard, they can be held in one hand while a stylus is used in the other. A tablet PC looks like a monitor, although it is a monitor, CPU, and ports all in one box. Instead of pointing and clicking, the user taps on icons to open and close programs, send e-mail, and perform other functions. When the user is composing, the tablet employs handwriting recognition software (which the user has trained). This type of hardware/software combination removes the burden of learning the keyboard (although one can be attached) and practicing keyboarding skills before students can participate in activities. This allows students to jump into authentic tasks quickly and promotes learner autonomy. Find more information at <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/tabletpc/>.

Of course, not all of these technologies are intuitive to use, work well all the time, or are cost efficient for many students. In some cases, however, one or more of these technologies may help provide an optimum language learning environment, so it is important to discuss the role that these technologies can play in the future of language teaching and learning. In the next column, I'll tell you about more new technologies that are currently available.

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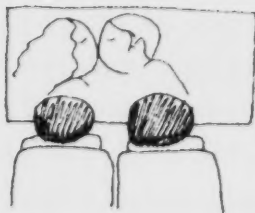
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Sharing Power in the Classroom

BY PATRICIA RICHARD-AMATO

Change is inevitable. We have come to expect it. It has brought new ways of looking at learning and teaching, at the teacher's role in those processes, and at the whole classroom environment. Sometimes we resist new perspectives on teaching, at least at first. However, if we discover some truth in them based on our own experience, we are more likely to give them serious consideration, to talk (and perhaps argue) about them with colleagues and other associates, and, eventually, to take action and incorporate from them what makes sense to us, and disregard the rest.

One change that deserves serious consideration because it can make a big difference in our relationships with students is our willingness to share power in the classroom. I recently gave a talk on this subject at California TESOL, and many of the teachers with whom I spoke afterwards showed much interest in the basic premise: sharing power allows us to develop participatory classrooms in which all students can thrive.

Participatory Teaching and Critical Pedagogy

A movement toward participatory teaching is beginning to take shape. It started with a renewed interest in the teachings of Paulo Freire (1970), who believed students are not empty heads waiting to be filled with information mainly through transmission. Rather they are valuable sources of knowledge instrumental to their own learning and empowerment. This initial reasoning led Freire to the development of critical pedagogy, a philosophy of education which, from its inception, encouraged student participation through critical engagement, problem solving, and action that can lead to political and personal empowerment.

To further the goals of participatory teaching, Alastair Pennycook (1999) challenges the deterministic thinking often associated with authoritative, non-participatory education. Such thinking is frequently found, not only in our classrooms, but in the literature of our discipline in which different cultures are given distinctive labels and treated as the "exotic other," so typical of colonial discourse. Pennycook argues that labeling is one

means by which others are kept in their places by the most influential in society. Much political empowerment in a global world comes from functioning effectively in more than one cultural environment. Therefore, he and many others feel it is incumbent upon us to treat students as individuals and to value the backgrounds from which they come (see especially Banks, 1993 and Nieto, 2000).

What we can most readily learn from participatory teaching is that we can share power in the classroom with students and establish a more dialectical relationship with them. We can show respect for their first languages and cultures. We can explore how discourse and language are influenced by power relationships and struggles for justice and equality. And we can encourage students to consider the viewpoints of others, reflect upon them, and be transformed by them even if only in small ways.

But how can we do all these things? Elsa Auerbach (2000) describes how one might create a participatory learning community in the classroom based on critical pedagogy. She outlines some basic principles of participatory teaching:

1. The starting point is the experience of the participants; their needs and concerns should be central to curriculum content.
2. Everyone teaches, everyone learns.
3. Classroom processes are dialogical and collaborative.
4. Individual experience is linked to social analysis.
5. The acquisition of skills and information is contextualized.
6. The content goes back to the social context.

She goes on to say that "Ideal participatory classrooms probably do not actually exist; they are always in the process of becoming" (p. 149).

Components of the Participatory Learning Experience

Following Elsa Auerbach's lead, I have developed the "Components of the Participatory Learning Experience" (see below). Here I have added two factors that have been overlooked in current discussions of critical pedagogy. One factor is

the cognitive abilities of the student and the other is the student's proficiency in the language. I argue that both are important in that they determine the kinds of issues each student is able to identify and deal with in a meaningful way. However, students have been known to operate far above expectations when they are fully engaged in their own learning. There are seven Components of the Participatory Learning Experience:

1. **Identification** of participants' interests, needs, problems, and concerns is undertaken within the social context of the classroom and outside world.

2. **Negotiation** of the curriculum is pursued. The curriculum grows out of the participants' prior experience, future hopes, and present needs (academic, personal, and socio/political).

3. **Dialectical relationship formation** takes place throughout the process between students and teachers in which all participants are both learners and teachers.

4. **Skills development** most often occurs within the context of the tasks at hand.

5. **Exploration** of issues important to participants leads to in-depth reading and research, composition, discussion, analysis, and reflection. Moreover, such exploration often leads to related issues of interest forming the pivot around which the next investigations are built. These explorations must be generally appropriate to students' cognitive abilities and proficiency in the language that is to be the medium of discussion and instruction.

6. **Collaborative learning** is critical to the process.

7. **Critical analysis** takes place as participants deconstruct what they read and hear, accept what makes sense, and reject the rest. (Richard-Amato, in press)

Manifestations of Participatory Teaching

Participatory teaching is not something entirely new. Manifestations are already in play in many classrooms and have been perhaps for centuries whenever teachers and students share power as they come together in dialogue and mutual respect. Currently manifestations can be found in cooperative learning, reciprocal teaching

among peers, certain applications of the language experience approach, theme cycles (a type of inquiry-based teaching), problem posing and in many other practices. A few examples are below.

An Application of the Language Experience Approach

One application of the language experience approach particularly appropriate to this discussion involves the teacher as facilitator and co-author, rather than simply as a recorder of students' utterances (Richard-Amato, in press). In this application, the teacher and students create a collaborative product written for all to see. As they write together, the teacher guides students through questions and meaning clarification, bringing out their ideas and helping them to shape their language. As students become more proficient, they may exchange places with the teacher and serve as facilitators.

Problem Posing

Perhaps best known of the participatory approaches is problem-posing, which was developed by Freire and elaborated upon by Nina Wallerstein (1983) and many others. The process begins by listening to students to discover what issues they find most important. In problem-posing, we then locate a codification that students find meaningful—a story, a piece of music, an event in history. Students use the codification to pinpoint problems in their own lives, discuss and research issues, and decide upon possible courses of action. The activity can lead to other activities and related issues. The cartoon at right is a codification for a history-based lesson. Needless to say, there's a lot of irony in this situation for students who see it. Here are some questions typically asked. Think about how you might answer them yourself.

1. What is happening here?
2. Is there a problem? If so, what is it?
3. Have you ever experienced this problem?
4. What can we do?

Once the problem is identified and fully aired, students talk about possible courses of action. The issue may lead to research, composition, small group discussions, and projects of various sorts. It may even lead to action beyond the classroom—letters to the editor, calls to congressional representatives or other leaders, interviews in the community, to name a few examples. The lesson plans grow out of the issue and how students perceive it. Only one problem should be dealt with at a time so issues do not become clouded. In addition, the teacher needs to flow with

students when pinpointing the problem rather than lead them to a predetermined one. Problem-posing is not a one-approach-fits-all formula. It will and should differ for different courses, students, and situations.

Reaction Dialogues

Another practice worthy of discussion involves dialectical writing through "The Reaction Dialogue." I have identified four types of reaction dialogues:

1. Teacher-presented stimulus / student reaction
2. Student-presented stimulus / student (peer) or teacher reaction
3. Student-product (could be a reaction)/teacher reaction
4. Student-product / student (peer) reaction (Richard-Amato, in press)



"IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT HERE, WHY DON'T YOU PEOPLE GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM!"

In the first type, the teacher presents a stimulus followed by a student reaction in writing. The stimulus can be a story, a picture (such as the cartoon used for problem-posing), a poem, a song, an editorial, and so forth. The student reactions can include writings of various kinds—a few sentences, a paragraph, or several paragraphs in essay form. The teacher and students first discuss the possibilities for reaction. If a story is presented, they might agree or disagree with the characters' actions, critique the story, or talk about similar experiences. If the stimulus is a picture, they might describe what they think is happening or will happen in the picture. They might write their opinions about the meaning it has for them. If there are people in the picture, they might turn them into characters for a short scenario. Or they might simply write about how the picture makes them feel. However, the

reaction does not have to be in writing at all at first. A drawing can express a reaction. Drawings are especially appropriate for reluctant writers and for students who are non-literate or pre-literate.

In the second type of reaction dialogue, it is the student who brings in the story, picture, poem, and so forth and it is the other students and the teacher who react. The classroom has now become more dialectical; students are now assuming a role that would traditionally belong to the teacher.

The last two types of reaction dialogues are self-explanatory. Reaction dialogues, like problem-posing, can lead to other lessons, composition, projects of various kinds, and other topics of interest and concern.

Theme Cycles

Yet another practice enabling us to share power with students is known as theme cycles, a kind of investigative inquiry proposed by Harste, Short, and Burke (1988). First the teacher and students each make a list of topics. The two lists are blended by mutual agreement to provide possibilities for the next topic of research and discussion. Through negotiation, one topic is selected as a starting point. Let's say that the topic grew out of the cartoon used for problem-posing. Let's say that the students wanted to know more about the Native Americans hovering in the background. A simple list is made of questions to investigate about Native Americans:

- How did they live?
- How did their cultures differ from one another?
- What problems have they had to overcome in the past?
- What problems must they face now?

- What contributions have they made to our society?

Then students and the teacher together make decisions about books to read, people to interview, places to visit, etc. As questions are explored, new questions are added and new discoveries are made leading to yet further questions and further research. Throughout the process, students and the teacher share what they learn. The teacher acts as facilitator as well as participant ensuring that the activity is carried out successfully. All the while language skills are integrated with the content and are taught as they are needed.

Meeting Standards Through Participatory Teaching

There is a central question that concerns the integration of language skills and its relationship to the current emphasis on standards: Can participatory learning

prepare students to meet standards? The answer here, I believe, is a very definite "yes!" Participatory learning makes it likely that students will be motivated to acquire necessary skills in the first place because such skills are taught when they are most needed rather than according to the mandates of a highly specified curriculum. Moreover, within a participatory framework, standards can and should be negotiated whenever possible. Now this might be anathema to some, but not all students need or want to know, for example, the intricacies of parallel structure or how to use rhetorical questions to advantage in a composition. Much depends upon their goals and aspirations.

Common Misconceptions

Unfortunately, a few misconceptions have arisen concerning participatory teaching. One common misunderstanding is that the teacher must give up all traditional practices to establish a participatory environment. This is simply not true. Many of the more traditional practices (including grammar instruction) can be effective, depending upon the proficiency levels, age levels, needs and cultural expectations of students. Not only that, but basic communicative practices can serve as launching platforms for participatory practices. For example, at mid-beginning to intermediate levels, sentences to finish

such as "I like to..." can progress to "I wish I could..." and eventually to more issue-oriented stems such as "If only..." What is essential to implementing participatory teaching is a modification of the traditional teacher's role at all levels. As students gain maturity and proficiency in the language and become gradually more accustomed to sharing power, they need to take on greater responsibility for their own learning through planning, critical exploration, decision making, and reflective thinking.

Another common misunderstanding is thinking the teacher needs to turn over the reins of power to students. On the contrary, Freire himself stressed that the teacher can and should be very much involved and influential concerning what happens in the classroom. The teacher still teaches, but so do the students. The students still learn but so does the teacher. Each participant considers the other to be an important source of knowledge and skills.

Over time the learning becomes more and more collaborative as students become informed about issues that concern them and have the ability to express opinions, explore options, and make reasonable choices based on a critical analysis of what's at stake for themselves and for the society in which they live.

Patricia A. Richard-Amato, an ESL and language arts teacher for many years in the public schools in the United States, is currently professor emerita at California State University, Los Angeles.

This article has been adapted by the author from Richard-Amato (in press).

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Richard Firsten
The Grammar Guy

My Grammatical Pet Peeve

Dear Richard: I thought I understood conditional sentences quite well, but then something came up in class which threw me. Please tell me if both of these phrases are correct and if they mean the same thing: 1) If he were here... 2) If he was here... —Ruth Colford, East Lansing, MI

Dear Ruth:

Both can be correct in one sense, and only one can be correct in another sense. In an imaginary idea, they're equally correct: *If he were/was here, I'd tell him just what I think.* In this case, the person being discussed isn't present. The only difference is that we consider *were* a more formal style than *was*. But now look at this sentence: *If he was here, I didn't know it.* This is quite a different situation. Someone has said that the person being discussed was present and the speaker didn't know that. The *if*-clause is a rhetorical device rather than an imaginary idea. In this case, *were* cannot be used in place of *was*.

Dear Grammar Guy:

I remember an English teacher of mine in junior high telling us never to say *the reason why*, but I hear people say it all the time. Is it wrong or isn't it? —Percy Simon, Brooklyn Heights, NY

Dear Percy:

Wow! You've hit upon one of my pet peeves. It's wrong, Percy,

because it's redundant, and we should avoid being redundant in educated speech. When you say *the reason why*, *why* means *the reason*, ergo the redundancy. In other words, you can say *The reason (that) they did it is unclear* or *Why they did it is unclear*, but you should never combine them and say *The reason why they did it is unclear*. Thanks for asking.

Here's our "Food for Thought" answer from Jeanne Piro of Pelham, NY. The question was "Why is it okay to say *She felt his pain deeply*, but it's not okay to say *He dug the hole deeply*?" Jeanne wrote, "I think the distinction here is the linking verb in the first sentence. In *She felt his pain deeply*, the verb *felt* is modified by the adverb *deeply*, describing the way she felt. In the second sentence, the word *deeply* is inaccurate because only an adjective is required here to modify the noun *hole*. How close am I?" You're right on the money, Jeanne! Good job!

Here's "Food for Thought" for this issue: How many ways does English have to express the future? Send your "Food for Thought" answers or other grammar questions by 2/28 to ESLGrammarGuy@aol.com or Grammar Guy c/o *ESL Magazine*, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD, 21401.

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer, and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida.

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Reading is a Tapestry

The Tapestry Reading Series
Reading Series Editor M.E. Sokolik
Heinle and Heinle, 2000

When faced with the challenging cognitive process of communicating about the meaning of written text, college students in ESL reading programs commonly rely on the surface skills of describing, reporting, and, all too often, rote memory disgorgement to satisfy themselves and, they hope, their instructors that they have "comprehended" a reading. Many students only reluctantly engage in critical thinking. As a result, those higher order thinking skills fundamental to success in college-level courses—i.e., the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate—remain underdeveloped.

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The extension activities are based on interpretation of content, and students are introduced to complementary ways of information expansion. The short CNN videos available for purchase with the series and online text suggestions that accompany each chapter of the *Tapestry Reading* series seamlessly integrate new literacies with the traditional. Students thereby acquire an introduction to research in both print and electronic media.

Only in the area of objective assessment is the *Tapestry Reading* series deficient. With the current outcome education mandate, editors would be wise to improve the rigor of student online quizzes and instructor manual tests. Formal evaluations such as pretests and posttests that reliably measure reading ability at each text level would be a useful and appreciated tool for teachers.

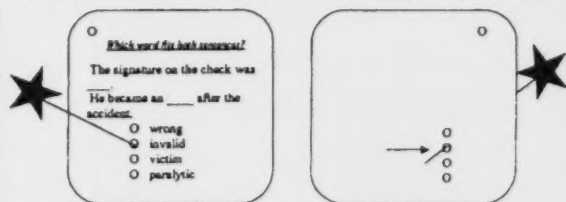
Still, the many exceptionally positive features of the *Tapestry Reading* series provide a strong foundation for attaining reading proficiency, an essential transferable skill for academic and professional success.

William E. Brázda, D.A., is ESL Academic Reading Coordinator for Long Beach City College, Long Beach, California.

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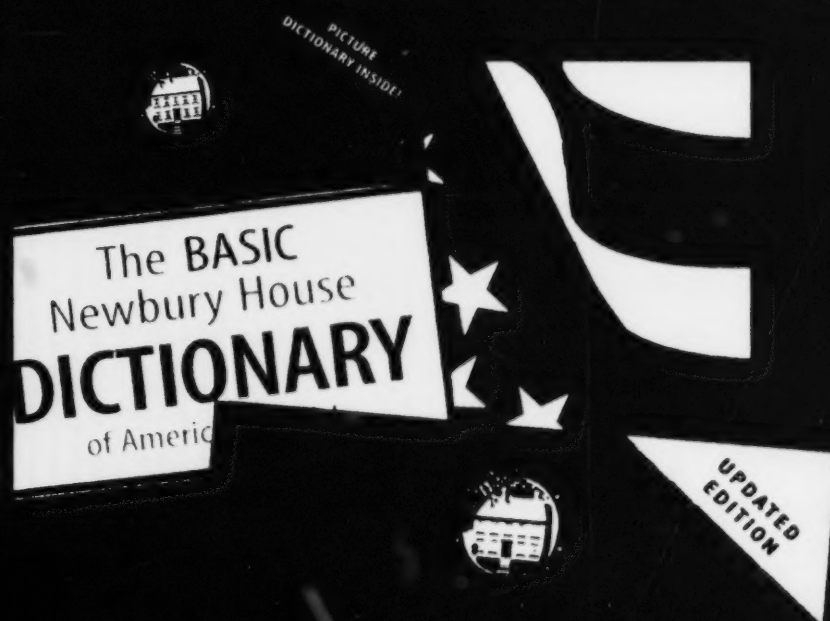
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Content for Conversation Partners

BY KATHLEEN OLSON

The atmosphere is alive with sounds and laughter. The buzz of conversation fills the air. Voices are raised to be a part of the action. Communication is taking place. This is a gathering of conversation partners—English language learners practicing their English with native speakers.

Building Communicative Competence

The ability to communicate in English—that is, the ability to interpret and produce meaning—is an important goal for English language learners—especially for those who need to fulfill roles as family members, community members, students, teachers, employers or employees in an English-speaking environment. While there are many influential factors in second language learning—for example, learner characteristics such as age, personality, and intelligence—the critical dimension in language learning, according to discourse theorists and social-interactionists, is interaction with other speakers (Hatch, 1983).

One learns to do by doing—people learn to walk by walking and they learn to drive by driving. It makes sense then that people learn to communicate by communicating. Learners must actively work on communicating to develop skills in communication, and they must practice extensively. “Those learners who engage in the regular use of their second language and receive the greater quantity of input will most

likely demonstrate a greater ability to use their second language” (Larsen-Freeman, 1991). It follows, then, that learners should be provided with as much speaking time as possible, both in and out of the classroom. This is one of the main reasons conversation partner programs are established.



Fluency Over Accuracy

In developing communicative competence, learners need many opportunities to communicate without having to concentrate on structure and form. Being understood is much more important than using correct vocabulary or grammar. In communicative language teaching, the emphasis is on

fluency and comprehensibility as opposed to accuracy. Fluency in speaking can be thought of as the ability to generate and communicate one's ideas intelligibly and with relative ease but not necessarily with accuracy. According to Brumfit (1984), fluency is “the maximally effective operation

of the language system so far acquired by the student.” Faerch, Haastrup and Phillipson (1984) define fluency as “the speaker's ability to make use of whatever linguistic and pragmatic competence” he or she has. Experiencing fluency also builds a sense of comfort, confidence, and control in the learner. Students working on fluency or struggling to express ideas need extensive speaking opportunities in informal contexts to develop this skill. The intent of conversation partner programs is to provide learners with fluency-developing activities. They provide learners with opportunities for meaningful interaction in the target language.

In addition to opportunities for interaction, learners need additional support

in developing fluency. The extent to which conversation occurs is often affected by differences in background knowledge, cultural expectations and personality. Some of these factors cannot be changed, but others can be. Teachers, tutors and conversation partners can help a learner develop communicative competence by consider-

ing these factors in the design of conversation programs.

Conversational Content

Communication involves being able both to comprehend the subject under discussion and contribute to the conversation. In order to understand or especially to speak on any subject, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the topic. Carol VanDuzer (1997) at the Center for Applied Linguistics says of listening, "Content that is familiar is easier to comprehend than content with unfamiliar vocabulary or for which the listener has insufficient background knowledge." The more knowledge the learner has to facilitate understanding about a topic, the easier it is for the learner to be an active participant and to speak with ease and fluency. Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) found that adults learn best when the "content is personally relevant to past experience or present concerns." This means that the topics for conversational partners should be familiar to the learner. This often involves sharing information about life experiences such as schooling, family life, housing, and transportation. By eliminating the constraint of a lack of background knowledge and information, the learner has an opportunity to work on developing fluency and building communicative competence.

To develop communicative competence, learners must want to speak. Therefore, not only should the conversational content be familiar, it should be useful or interesting to the speakers. The learners must be convinced of the need to relate to the subject and communicate about it to others. They need to feel that they are speaking not simply because the teacher expects them to, but because there is some interesting reason to do so or because there is something to gain from the interactions.

Imagine traveling in another country—what would you like to know about that country and its residents? What topics would you be comfortable talking about if you had limited skills in that language? Newcomers and visitors often want to learn about the country and its culture. English language learners are interested in

finding out the same information about the country they are visiting or moving to. They are interested in cultural and personal differences, especially those that are obvious to them or that are important in their lives. Some of these topics are issues such as how the justice system works, driving rules and etiquette, and information about holidays. Hamers and Blanc (1989) and others have stated that second language acquisition must be accompanied by second culture acquisition. A learner must acquire cultural knowledge in addition to communicative competence. Conversation programs should provide topics and activities that incorporate the goals, interests and experiences of the learners.

Structured Questions

One way to stimulate more informative talk for many conversation partners is to provide support for the learners by introducing activities that are somewhat structured. This can be done by providing leading questions organized around a relevant topic. While it is helpful to have some structure, it should not destroy the informality that makes conversation groups fun. Some questions such as yes/no or closed questions are actually barriers to conversation. Carefully designed open-ended questions will stimulate conversation. Good questions allow learners to share information and allow for flexible responses.

Using Bloom's taxonomy, here are some appropriate words for different levels of questioning: 1) Knowledge (state, list, name, tell); 2) Comprehension (explain, discuss, describe); 3) Application (show how, give an example); 4) Analysis (compare, differentiate); 5) Synthesis (predict, suppose, speculate); 6) Evaluation (assess, justify, prioritize).

Some good questions involve asking the speakers to explain something, provide evidence of something, provide their viewpoint on something, discuss similarities and differences—questions that value the knowledge of the speaker.

Strategies for Conversational Maintenance

Despite good questions, conversations

Conversational Question Types

Good questions allow learners to share information and give flexible responses. Using Bloom's taxonomy, here are some appropriate question types with examples:

- ▶ **Knowledge** (state, list, name, tell): Tell a fairy tale you heard as a child.
- ▶ **Comprehension** (explain, discuss, describe): Discuss your family mealtimes. How was the food served? What did people talk about?
- ▶ **Application** (show how, give an example): Show how to do a simple exercise.
- ▶ **Analysis** (compare, differentiate): What are some differences between classrooms in your country and in the United States?
- ▶ **Synthesis** (predict, suppose, speculate): An owner of an egg farm killed 17,000 fish through pollution of a local stream. What are some ways you think the owner could be punished?
- ▶ **Evaluation** (assess, justify, prioritize): What are some situations in your country in which people might not always tell the truth? If you were the doctor of a patient with cancer whose situation seemed hopeless, would you tell the patient so? Would it matter if the patient was young or old? male or female? had other problems? had a weak character?

Conversational Strategies

There are several important strategies that that students should learn—these may vary from culture to culture:

- ▶ Giving Feedback
- ▶ Interrupting
- ▶ Asking for Clarification
- ▶ Using Gestures
- ▶ Maintaining Silence
- ▶ Taking Turns
- ▶ Self-monitoring
- ▶ Organizing
- ▶ Maintenance Strategies such as "uh-huh" and "mmm" to indicate that listening is taking place.

sometimes falter when learners don't know that it's their turn to speak or don't know the strategies native speakers use to indicate they are following the conversation. Communicating with persons from different cultures involves not only choosing the appropriate words but also using the appropriate verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The student learning English must also learn the underlying cultural rules that guide conversation in the environment where they'll be speaking. This strategic competence has been described as the use of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to enhance the effectiveness of communication or compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or insufficient competence (Canale and Swain, 1980).

There are several important strategies that that students should learn—these may vary from culture to culture: giving feedback, interrupting, asking for clarification, using gestures, maintaining silence, taking turns, self-monitoring, organizing, and maintenance strategies such as “uh-huh” and “mmm” to indicate that listening is

taking place. In addition to giving direct instruction on these strategies, the teacher can also give a list of the strategies to conversation pairs. Students can then discuss the strategies and observe others using them before applying the strategies themselves. There are several goals for instruction in communication strategies: 1) the learner understands his or her role in communication—that speaking is a joint negotiation of meaning between people rather than a one-sided endeavor, 2) the learner understands that conversations can be maintained or repaired by use of communication strategies, and 3) the learner takes responsibility for selecting strategies and monitoring their usefulness.

These communication strategies, along with interesting, relevant and familiar content, structured questions and ample speaking practice, will help learners on their way to developing communicative competence in conversation. And the atmosphere that is alive with the sounds of many different voices coming together and actively conversing will herald the students' progress.

Kathleen Olson is the training and support specialist for adult ESL teachers in Ohio and the author of Something to Talk About, a conversation resource book for teachers and tutors.

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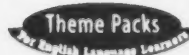
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English Teaching in Indonesia: Status, Issues and Challenges

BY BACHRUDIN MUSTHAFA, PH.D.

Indonesia is made of 17,000 islands (14,000 are inhabited) stretching across 3,200 miles of equatorial oceans. With her current population over 200 million, Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country and has more than 500 ethnic groups, each with its own language (Purwadi & Muljoatmodjo, 2000). Indonesia has a national, unifying language, *Bahasa Indonesia*, which is the official language used in offices, most business dealings, and social interactions on official occasions. It is also the language of instruction for all levels of schooling in Indonesia.

The Educational System

Indonesia has a unified national education system that consists of three main stages: nine years of basic education (six years of elementary school and three years of lower secondary school, i.e., junior high), secondary education (i.e., senior high), and tertiary education (university level). Tertiary education consists of three levels: a four-year *sarjana* (equal to a bachelor's level), *magister* (master's level), and *doktor*. In addition, children may attend preschool, which is, for the most part, run by private educational institutions.

While there is a unified national curriculum, local communities are allowed to develop about 20% of the total curriculum—the “local content”—so that the educational enterprise meets the needs of its stakeholders and the community develops a sense of ownership.

The Development of a National English Syllabus

As early as 1950, when a foreign language to be chosen for the school curriculum nationwide (either Dutch or English), policy makers in Indonesia were well aware that English could serve a very important role as a tool in the development of the country, both for international relations and scientific-technological advancement. English was chosen over Dutch despite the fact that the Dutch had colonized Indonesia for three and a half centuries. As is very well recorded in our history, the

official status of English in the country has been “the first foreign language” and the political stance of Indonesia's government is quite firm: “English is not and will never be a social language nor the second official language in Indonesia” (Sadtono, 1997:7).

With English being given this status, the objective of English language teaching (ELT) in Indonesia is to equip students with a working knowledge of the language. While this instructional objective may appear self-explanatory, in the context of formal schooling, the notion of “working knowledge in English” has been approached in different ways throughout the history of ELT in Indonesia. For instance, in the 1975 English Syllabus, while the final goal of teaching was said to be the development of communicative competence in English, the actual English teaching focused almost exclusively on the mastery of linguistic patterns without giving proper attention to their use in communicative situations.

Quite predictably, the mismatch between the goal of ELT and the means being used to achieve it led to disappointment among both ELT theorists and practitioners. In the 1984 Syllabus, which served to correct the 1975 syllabus, the notion of “working knowledge in English” was then approached by restoring the true goal of English teaching, that is, “meaningfulness and communicative functions” (Ministry of Education and Culture 1986 and 1987 cited in Huda, 1999). In actual classroom practice, however, the notion of “communicative competence” was misinterpreted and taught by most teachers as “oral skills.” This misunderstanding, in turn, caused controversy among English teachers and experts.

Building on the lessons learned from these two failed attempts, current ELT in Indonesia adopts communicative language principles under the 1994 English Syllabus, which brings to the forefront the notion of “meaningfulness approach.” Huda (1999) has interpreted this approach in two ways: 1) meaning-based instruction, and 2) meaningful instruction. Meaning-based instruction starts from the

notion of language as a means to express and understand meaning. As meaning is determined by language scope and is also defined by social contexts, ELT should be targeted to develop students' ability to understand and express meaning in the context of language used for communicative purposes. Language learning is meaningful if students learn expressions at the discourse level as opposed to isolated words. To this end, the presentation of learning materials must be in the context of specific situations because meaning changes in different contexts.

The second interpretation of the “meaningfulness approach” is that instruction should be meaningful to learners. Language instruction is meaningful if it is relevant to learners' needs and demands. The relevance of English instruction to the needs of learners as a group is ensured when what is being taught to—and engaged by—learners is somehow related to what they think is important and useful. To this end, the selection and presentation of learning materials should be made with reference to what is generally of interest to learners (horizontal relevance) and/or what is likely to be needed by learners in the near future (vertical relevance). To make the whole learning activity authentic, all language components and linguistic macro skills should be integrated, and treatment of any linguistic aspect or skill is to be made in the context of the whole discourse (e.g., Musthafa 2001).

While, at the theoretical level, the goals seem reasonably clear, remaining at issue here is how classroom teachers as front-line players can translate the ideas as originally conceived by the syllabus designers. The issue of teachers' ability to translate principles into classroom practice becomes important because it is the classroom teachers who will determine what happens—and does not happen—in the classroom.

Another issue of concern is the kind and focus of the tests administered to assess the relative success of the instruction. The issue of test format and emphasis is important because we have learned

from research and experience that grades are important to both teachers and students. That is to say, tests, as research has established, will drive instruction.

The biggest challenge, then, is to empower classroom teachers so that they are productively involved in the design of course syllabi and assessment instruments.

English in Secondary Schools

In secondary schools, where students receive the bulk of their English language instruction, English is a required subject. In lower secondary schools, it is taught four times a week (45 min. per lesson). In upper secondary schools, English is taught four times a week in the first and second years. In the third year, it is taught five times a week in the science and social studies strands and 11 times a week in the language strand. One academic year is 36 weeks, so lower secondary school students receive up to 136 lessons a year and 368 lessons in three years. Thus, during their schooling in the lower and upper secondary schools, the students get some 736 hours of English instruction—a very significant number of hours devoted to a foreign language.

Officially, the English instructional objective at the lower secondary school is that the students will develop the English skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing in thematic situations in accordance with their individual developmental levels and interests at the 1,000 word-level and using appropriate structures. In the upper level, the students are expected to develop similar language skills in certain thematic situations at the 2,500 word-level and using appropriate structures.

To this end, ELT in Indonesia's schools adopts a meaning-based approach, as mentioned before, with the following guiding principles: 1) language is an instrument to express meaning; 2) meaning is determined by both linguistic and situational contexts; 3) learning a language is learning to use the language in communicative activities in the target language; 4) mastery of the language components is needed to support the mastery of communicative competence; and 5) the teaching of the language components can be done when-ever necessary (Huda 1999).

Unlike its predecessors, the current 1994 English Syllabus adopts a more flexible format leaving a great deal of room for creativity on the part of teachers and materials developers. The current curriculum provides only general guidelines in the form of learning objectives, teaching methods and techniques, and the scope

and general order of the learning materials.

While ample room is provided for teachers and materials developers to develop instructional materials, teachers are left virtually to their own resources. This raises a question: How many teachers feel confident and are capable of preparing pedagogically sound instructional materials on their own when they have never received systematic training on the matter? It has become public knowledge that, for the major part of our teaching force, the proficiency level of foreign language teachers in Indonesia is barely enough to understand the materials they strive to teach.

This being the case, a major challenge we face is how to balance giving teachers



freedom while empowering them with solid professional knowledge to enable them to make informed decisions.

English in Elementary Schools

English in elementary schools is taught within the "local content" part of the curriculum. This gives flexibility to the school management to make decisions regarding the teaching of English based on the students' needs or community and environmental demands (Suyanto 1997).

The main objective of English lessons at this early stage is to introduce young learners to the idea that in addition to their native and national languages, they can also have a foreign language. More specifically, the teaching of English in elemen-

tary schools is targeted toward the development of the ability to understand simple oral and written language (Huda 1999).

Many elementary schools have taken advantage of this local-content curriculum offer. For example, in Malang, a small town in east Java, there were 22 elementary schools introducing English as an extra-curricular subject to their young learners (Wahyanti 1978 cited in Suyanto, 1997). Currently, in the city of Bandung, West Java, there are hundreds of elementary schools teaching English to their fourth to sixth grade children.

While the idea of introducing a foreign language to young learners is encouraging as it indicates a new realization of the importance of English in the modern world, ELT in elementary schools in Indonesia has caused some concerns. The first issue of concern is instructional materials. Under the current governmental initiative of universal nine-year basic education, all elementary school pupils will continue their schooling through lower secondary school. However, because English is not offered in all elementary schools, some children in the lower secondary schools have already had English lessons and others have not. The concern here is

whether or not the instructional materials in the elementary schools should be the same as those in the lower secondary schools. This question is worth careful consideration as each choice will have potential problems associated with it.

A second issue is teachers of English for young learners. Elementary school teachers are generally willing to teach English, but their willingness is

based on the wrong assumption that it is a simple matter. These elementary school teachers are not actually prepared to teach English in general—not to mention English for young learners in particular. Teaching English has never been part of the curriculum of elementary school teacher education programs in Indonesia (Huda 1999).

English in Universities

ELT in universities differs from ELT in secondary schools in various aspects, including its status, number of hours, instructional objectives, teaching methods, and instructional materials. Each higher learning institution enjoys autonomy in determining all these matters, making ELT at this educational level variable not only across institutions but also across depart-

ments in the same university. More specifically—with the exception of departments of English—some universities or colleges offer English as a required course, other institutions offer English courses as an elective, and in other universities, English courses are nowhere to be found.

While universities differ in the way they treat English as an academic course, all share the realization that proficiency in English is important to students' academic success since a large number of college-level textbooks are written in English. In those universities that don't provide English instruction, the message to students is clear: it's up to you to learn English on your own!

There seems to be a collective sense of doubt that two or four credit units of on-campus formal English instruction make a difference for university students—considering the fact that some 736 hours of English in junior and senior high school do not seem to equip students with the skills required to read textbooks on their own. The biggest challenge, then, is to design a relatively brief but focused skills-based English course that could help students directly with their studies in their major.

Private Sector English Courses

In response to ever-increasing public demand, there is currently a myriad of English courses in Indonesia—in big cities, small towns, and even in remote areas. Employing both local teachers and native speakers of English, these mostly privately owned English courses offer various English programs: from those for children at the beginning level to adult-professionals who need very specific skills-based (e.g., English for textbook reading) as well as discipline- or vocation-specific English instruction (e.g., English for lawyers). Additionally, courses on the TOEFL and GRE are easy to find in virtually any city in Indonesia. These mushrooming private English courses actually help the government overcome some of the deficiencies in the system of ELT. The Ministry of National Education cannot tackle the teaching of English alone, particularly because it does not have its expertise centralized in one place, which causes communication and logistical problems.

Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Prospective teachers, including English teachers, are generally trained in government-subsidized teacher training programs in state teacher training colleges and universities that have a faculty of teacher training and educational sciences. These teacher training institutions generally offer both degree (*sarjana*, *magister*,

and *doktor*) and non-degree teacher preparation programs ranging from two to three years. Aside from these regular academic programs, these institutions may also run in-service teacher up-grading programs for a specific group of participants—usually on a contract basis with the Ministry of National Education or other educational agencies. For example, as this article is being written, the English department of the Indonesia University of Education is running a one-year English teacher certification program specifically designed for secondary Islamic school teachers under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Upon graduation from the program, teachers of English usually pursue their own professional development while discharging their day-to-day duties by way of in-service training programs. This can be done “informally” by participating in professional activities with their fellow teachers and members of English teacher associations and “formally” by taking academic courses in colleges and universities in their regions. For those who teach in higher-learning institutions (i.e., university lecturers) more systematic and aggressive staff development plans are available with various scholarship supports from the government to continue study for advanced degrees (i.e., master's and doctorate levels) both in-country as well as overseas.

There are at least two big professional associations for teachers of English in Indonesia, and they conduct regular professional development programs: Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) and Council of Teachers of English (MGMP). The former is national in scope and regularly holds national and international seminars to disseminate new information about trends and issues in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. MGMP is regional in scope and serves as an informal forum for teachers to exchange ideas and offer mutual assistance among members. MGMPs in some provinces regularly conduct textbook writing workshops and produce textbooks for publication.

Teachers from Outside Indonesia

Although there are no accurate statistics regarding the number of expatriate English teachers currently working in Indonesia, there are obviously thousands of native English speakers teaching in various institutions in the country. Various programs have made this possible: government-to-government exchange programs, university-to-university partnership programs, and the commercial job market. For instance, the Teaching Fellow Program of the U.S. Embassy in Indonesia is a good example of a government-to-government exchange program

through which interested American nationals may come to Indonesia as English instructors—or expert lecturers in any discipline. In a university-to-university partnership program between Ohio State University and Indonesia University of Education (UPI), professors from Ohio State recently gave a series of lectures and workshops at UPI on democratic teaching and constructivism. Finally, the commercial job market gives people access to Indonesia with competitive teacher recruitment by various English course institutions and educational agencies like English First, the International Language Program, and other English education centers across the country.

A Middle Course

ELT in a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual country with a huge population and enormous diversity across regions such as Indonesia has posed great challenges for our English education profession. The government of Indonesia has responded by devising a wide array of strategies to maintain its unity as a nation-state and, at the same time, to be an active member of the global society. *Bahasa Indonesia* is maintained as the unifying national language while English enjoys first-foreign-language status. As part of the overall cultural development strategy, the Ministry of National Education strives to chart a middle course as a way to develop the nation-state to its fullest potential. The national curriculum is designed to ensure the education of all of Indonesia's children yet it is balanced by attempts to address diverse local needs. As we identify issues and challenges in ELT in Indonesia, we pave the way and garner resources for a better future for Indonesia in general and ELT in Indonesia in particular.

Bachrudin Musthafa, Ph.D., teaches graduate studies in English in the Department of English, The Indonesia University of Education in Bandung, Indonesia. He may be reached at musthafa@indo.net.id.

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The Value of Volunteering, Part II

The Soros Professional English Language Teaching program (SPELT) is part of the English Language Program of the Open Society Institute-New York (OSI-NY). Established by George Soros, OSI-NY is part of the Soros Foundation Network that operates in thirty countries. SPELT provides teachers (fellows) and teacher trainers for participating foundations of the network. The fellows and trainers provide professional support to English language programs that are run by these national foundations. The program has two distinct arms—the SPELT Fellows program and the SPELT Teacher Trainers program. The following is an interview with Laureen Phillips, Program Officer for the SPELT programs in New York.

TN: What qualities do you look for in applicants?

LP: We are looking for talented, flexible and culturally sensitive ESL/EFL professionals. SPELT seeks to help local educational agencies cease dependence on international expertise and funding. Local program coordinators develop strategies with this in mind. SPELT fellows and teacher trainers' tasks include designing and teaching pre- and in-service methodology courses and English for specific purpose courses, advising textbook writing teams and teachers' associations, and identifying local teachers and/or institutions to carry on the work they do. We need teachers with in-depth knowledge of foreign language methodology who are willing and able to collaborate with local colleagues.

TN: What is the most difficult part of being in the program?

LP: The challenges of living in some of the countries where we place SPELT fellows and teacher trainers should not be underestimated. Living conditions vary enormously across the region (Eurasia, former Yugoslavia, Mongolia, and Haiti). Applicants should be healthy and hardy individuals who are self-reliant and can deal positively with the situations that arise when living in an environment that can be dramatically different from the one to which they are accustomed.

TN: What else should readers know about the program?

LP: First, international participants in our program have found it highly beneficial for their careers, as well as very rewarding in terms of life experience and ability to do good and make a difference in a world different from their own. Second, on average, over 40% of new SPELT fellows renew after the first year, and about 30% stay with the program for three to four years.

For more information, contact the SPELT program at 212-548-0623, e-mail Tracy Sullivan at tsullivan@sorosny.org, or peruse their website at www.soros.org/spelt.

Thomas Nixon is the co-author of Bears' Guide to the Best Education Degrees by Distance Learning (Ten Speed Press). He can be reached at tnixon@cviip.net.



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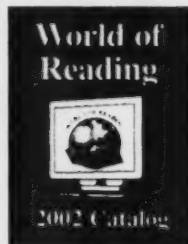
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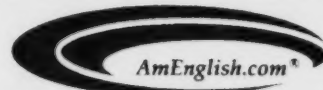
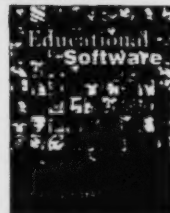


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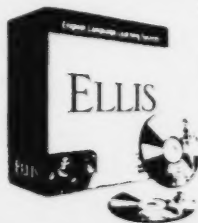
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Page 10



Page 16



Page 22



Page 26

FEATURES

Working to Make a Difference: Interview with Dr. James Alatis
by Marilyn Rosenthal 10

From Lessons to Life: Authentic Materials Bridge the Gap
by Maria Spelleri.....16

TESOL's P-12 Teacher Education Standards Are Here!
by Candace Harper 22

Who Am I? Issues of Language, Culture and Identity
for Native Americans
by William Demmert.....26

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Note.....4

Letters to the Editor.....5

News Briefs 6

Conference Calendar 7

Reviews.....20

Catalog Showcase.....30

COLUMNS

Christine Meloni's Networthy 8

Joy Egbert's Technology 14

Richard Firsten, The Grammar Guy 19

Thomas Nixon's Employment Focus.....29

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We Can Each Make a Difference!

Dr. James Alatis is well known among ESL/EFL professionals, especially for his years of leadership in TESOL. I had the opportunity of being a graduate student under Jim Alatis at Georgetown and of being present at the 1965 ad-hoc meeting in Tucson, Arizona that was part of the groundwork for the formation of TESOL. Throughout his career, Jim's hard work has really made a difference in the field.

The popular U.S. television show "Survivor" could also be the name of almost any adult ESL class. Adult ESL students are often in need of a crash course on living in a new culture, not to mention learning a new language. Maria Spelleri explains how using authentic materials in English language instruction meets the students' needs for learning both language and culture. A class that uses authentic materials effectively can really be a lifeline!

What does it take to be an effective ESL teacher? Check out the new TESOL P-12 Teacher Education Standards. Candace Harper was part of the team that developed them. She explains how the standards were developed, summarizes their content and tells how they will be used to make a difference.

What happens to a person when he or she learns a new language? Lots of things, of course, but the personal stakes are higher for someone whose first language and culture are being crowded out by a new language and culture. From his own experiences as a Native American and from his professional career, William Demmert reminds English language teachers of what's at stake for many of our students when they are learning English.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

38



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The U.S. Teacher Shortage

► My first question when I read Thomas Nixon's article was to wonder just how many of that supposed 79% were, for one, benefitless part-timers [from *ESL Magazine's* Online Poll: Is there a shortage of qualified ESL teachers in your U.S. school district? 79% of respondents said, "Yes."]. I suspect that was true for most of them. The next question was how many of them were inner city or border area jobs which do not appeal to many people. It would be interesting to see your data expanded explaining those 79% who claim to need ESL teachers (since it seems that about 90% of ESL teachers can't seem to

find any decent jobs with benefits and a livable wage).

We all know that teaching ESL in the U.S. is mainly a job for people whose spouses have real jobs. I don't even try to get anything in ESL when living in the U.S.—too much work required for too little income. Overseas, I teach EFL; in the U.S., I work as an accountant.

—CONNIE MILLER
McLean, VA

Content for Conversation Partners

► This article struck close to my heart. The church I attend is involved in mission work in Mexico, building churches, seminaries, schools, etc. There is also a large Mexican-American population and a Spanish-speaking church in our town. One project our church is considering is teaching English to our Mexican-American brothers and sisters and teaching Spanish to our own members to close the communication gap between us. Hopefully, one end result will be that these productive, responsible, and valued citizens of our community will not feel so isolated.

On these trips to Mexico, trying to communicate became very frustrating, and we did our best with what little we knew, with laughter and gestures. When I studied Spanish in high school (which some would

consider to be during the Jurassic period), we were taught only dialogues with an emphasis on gender, word structure and grammar. There was no emphasis on communication, conversation and common interests. Thus, I only remember scattered words, which are of little help.

As the author advises, if we emphasize conversation and personally relevant content in our ESL and foreign language classrooms, it would greatly enhance student interest and promote understanding and tolerance towards one another.

—CHRIS BROWN
High Point, NC

English in Indonesia

► Thank you for the article on English teaching in Indonesia. I have enjoyed teaching EFL in Indonesia since 1995 as a native speaker, in both the private sector and at the university level. The author did an excellent job of identifying the key challenges inherent in fostering a communicative approach to teaching English among this very large and diverse population. I appreciated learning more about the efforts being taken by the Ministry of National Education to address the issues.

—EILEEN NEE
The American English Center
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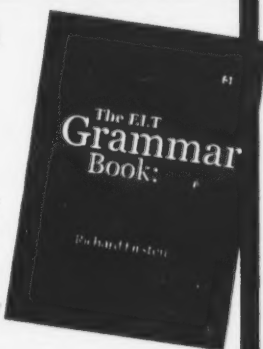
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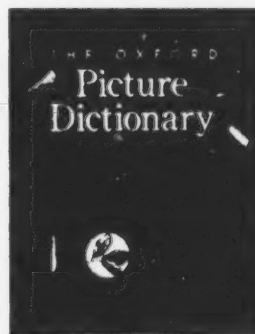
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Teaching Tolerance magazine, published for educators by the Southern Poverty Law Center, has launched a new website at www.teachingtolerance.org. Resources include lesson plans that promote tolerance, storybooks and games for learning, tools to evaluate websites, tests to assess attitudes about differences, education news, online forums for teachers and students, and more.

The Most Common Language Groups Among English Language Learners in the United States

According to the forthcoming *Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services, 1999-2001 Summary Report* from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs, over 400 first languages are spoken by limited English proficient (LEP) students nationwide. Spanish is the native language of 76.3% of LEP students. Vietnamese is the native language of 2.3%. Hmong is the native language of 2.2%. Haitian Creole is the native language of 1.1%. Korean is the native language of 1.1%, and Cantonese is the native language of 1.0%. The remaining 16% of LEP students speak other languages, each of which is spoken by less than 1% of the LEP student population.

New Name, New Resources at Bilingual Ed Clearinghouse

The name of the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) has been changed to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs. To date, the web address (www.ncbe.gwu.edu) has not been changed. New resources available at the website include:

- Implementing Reading First with English Language Learners
- State Elementary and Secondary LEP Enrollment Growth and Top Languages, 1999-2000
- Assessment, Accountability and the New ESEA
- Literacy and English Language Learners
- LEP Students and Title I Online Library
- National Clearinghouse 101 PowerPoint slideshow—overview of Clearinghouse resources.

New Acting Director of Office of English Language Acquisition

Marina Tse was recently appointed acting director of the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students, OELA (formerly the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, OBEMLA). Tse taught ESL for 17 years to adult immigrants in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She has served on the California State Board of Education, advocating for limited English proficient students, immigrant students and students with special needs. Tse also served as program chair for the California State Special Education Advisory Commission where she initiated a study of the overrepresentation of minority and bilingual students in special education. Tse immigrated to the United States from Taiwan at the age of 20.

First languages spoken by limited English proficient (LEP) students in the U.S.

Korean 1.1%	Haitian Creole 1.1%
Hmong 2.2%	Cantonese 1.0%
Vietnamese 2.3%	Other 16.0%



New Language Policy Research Website

The Education Policy Studies Laboratory (EPSL) has launched a website (<http://www.language-policy.org>) for the new Language Policy Research Unit (LPRU) at Arizona State University. LPRU priorities include interdisciplinary studies to promote equitable language policies in education and society; language demographic studies with policy implications for language rights and preservation; historical and contemporary studies on language contact, conflict, and minority language accommodation and promotion; media, legal and legislative analysis designed to better inform public discourse and policy making in state, national, and international contexts. The website lists a variety of print and online resources for language policy research.

Training Materials for Bilingual/ESOL Paraprofessionals

The Center for Applied Linguistics has developed a ready-to-use, 18-hour curriculum to help paraprofessionals work more effectively with English language learners (ELLs). According to author Judy Jameson (judy@cal.org), the curriculum teaches simple, flexible strategies to help ELLs develop literacy skills, learn academic content, and internalize learning strategies. The curriculum was developed and field-tested with the University of Central Florida for a bilingual ed. career ladder project funded by the U.S. Dept. of Ed. A final draft will be distributed in a post-convention institute at the annual TESOL conference (PCI #20, Sat., 4/13, 1-5 p.m.). The final curriculum will be available from Delta Systems (www.delta-systems.com/800-323-8270) in fall 2002.

Conference Calendar

March

- 2 **Hawai'i TESOL**. Honolulu, HI. Contact Patricia Reiss, reiss@flex.com.

- 3-5 **National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)**. Albuquerque, NM. Contact NCFL, 877-FAMILIT-1.

- 7-9 **Georgetown University Round Table on Language and Linguistics**. Washington, DC. Contact gurt@georgetown.edu.

- 7-9 **Southwest Conference On Language Teaching**. Oklahoma City, OK. Contact Audrey Cournia, 775-358-6943.

- 14-17 **California TESOL**. San Francisco, CA. Contact Kathy Sherak, 415-338-7382.

- 15 **National Institute for Literacy (NIFL)**. Houston, TX. Contact Esther Roberts, 301-294-5607.

- 15-17 **TESOL-SPAIN**. Madrid, Spain. Contact Holly Vass, holly.vass@wanadoo.es.

- 19-23 **National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)**. Philadelphia, PA. 202-898-1829.

- 20-22 **TESOL Arabia**. Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Contact Zafar Syed, z.syed@mli.ac.ae.

- 23 **Penn TESOL-East**. Philadelphia, PA. Contact Harrington E. Crissey, Jr., 215-473-4430.

- 24-27 **IATEFL**. York, United Kingdom. Contact IATEFL, iatefl@compuserve.com.

- 26-30 **The Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO)**. Davis, CA. Contact info@calico.org.

April

- 6-9 **American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL)**. Salt Lake City, UT. Contact 612-953-0805.

- 6-11 **National Migrant Education Conference**. St. Louis, MO. Contact 608-266-2690.

- 9 **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) Graduate Student Forum**. Salt Lake City, UT. Contact Lynn Henrichsen, lynn_henrichsen@byu.edu.

- 9-13 **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) Graduate Student Forum**. Salt Lake City, UT. Contact 703-836-0774.

- 16-18 **Department of Foreign Languages**. University of Bahrain, Bahrain. Contact uobconference2002@arts.uob.bh.

- 19-20 **Kansas TESOL (KATESOL)**. Hutchinson, KS. Contact Don Blackman, 620-275-8630.

- 19 **New York TESOL (NYTESOL)**. Molloy College Mini-conference, NY. Contact Irene Pompetti-Szul, 516-686-7660.

- 25-27 **Arizona TESOL**. Tucson, AZ. Contact Sarah Kim, 520-621-2698.

- 26 **Arkansas TESOL (ARKTESOL)**. Russellville, AR. Contact Leslie Moore, 479-524-5134 x455.

- 26-27 **Illinois TESOL/BE**. Chicago, IL. Contact Marsha Robbins Santelli, 773-525-3960.

May

- 9-11 **Sunshine State TESOL**. West Palm Beach, FL. Contact Cheryl Benz, 305-237-3699.

- 16-18 **TESL Canada**. Regina, SK. scenes@sk.sympatico.ca

- 17-18 **Universidad de las Américas-Puebla**. Puebla, Mexico. Contact Ashley Withers awithers@udlap.mx.

- 17-19 **Venezuela TESOL**. Margarita, Venezuela. Contact Natalia McCarthy, natiamccarthy@cantv.net.

- 18-19 **The Japan Association of Language Teaching (JALT)**. Hiroshima, Japan. Contact <http://www.jaltcall.org/>.

- 12-14 **TESOL Academy 2002**. Denver, CO. Contact

- 30 June 2 **National Multicultural Institute (NMCI)**. Washington, DC. Contact Crystal Cala, 202-483-0700.

June

- 21-23 **TESOL Academy 2002**. Orlando, FL. Contact TESOL Education Programs, 703-836-0774.

- 27-29 **The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Multilingual & Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Dyslexia**. Washington, DC. Contact IDA, 410-296-0232.

July

- 1-26 **Penn State Center for Language Acquisition. Summer Institute for Applied Linguistics**. State College, PA. Contact James P. Lantolf, conferenceinfo1@outreach.psu.edu.

- 5-8 **Community Languages and ESOL (CLESOL) and TESOL ANZ**. Wellington, New Zealand. Contact Elizabeth Morrison, e.n.morrison@massey.ac.nz.

- 12-14 **TESOL Academy 2002**. Denver, CO. Contact TESOL Education Programs, 703-836-0774.

- 15-18 **Brazil-TESOL**. Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Contact brztesol@nox.net.

September

- 19-21 **Southeast TESOL**. Regional conference, Atlanta, GA. Contact Frances Wilson, fwilsoncon@yahoo.com.

- 19-21 **Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés (FAAPI)**. Córdoba, Argentina. Contact Elba Debat, faapi2002@hotmail.com.

- 20-22 **Panamá TESOL**. Panamá, Republic of Panamá. Contact Edith Espino, +507-263-8000 ext. 2106.

ESL Magazine's Online Poll

How do you use the Internet most with your ESL students?

34% Research—student research on the Internet

14% E-mail—correspondence and writing practice

3% Publishing—student publishing on the Internet

48% Education—ESL instructional websites

www.eslmag.com

ESL/EFL Materials Writers Online Magazine

The Materials Writers Web Resource (MWWR) is an online magazine for ESL/EFL materials writers. The editors are Pat Byrd, Cynthia Schuermann, and Keith Folse. MWWR will allow materials writers to communicate regarding materials writing and will provide information about presentations of interest at upcoming conferences. Current articles discuss writer's block, research on exercise design in ESL books, and issues in textbook selection and use. Additional contributions are being sought, and submission information is available at http://www.geocities.com/materials_writers.

Using the Web to Teach Punctuation

How often do we hear that intimidating question—"Will technology replace teachers?" I must confess that I am really thankful that the computer can sometimes, but not always, replace me. Particularly in beginning and intermediate ESL/EFL courses, we frequently feel that we have too much material to cover in the time we have. The computer can quite effectively help us cover some of this material. One example is teaching punctuation.

Websites abound that explain the rules of punctuation, offer interactive quizzes, and provide immediate feedback, often beyond a mere "Right!" or "Wrong!" Most of them, however, target native speakers and are difficult for non-native speakers. Here are some of my favorite sites that are appropriate for our ESL/EFL students.

Dave's ESL Café: ESL Quiz Center

<http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/quiz/punctuation1.html>
This Quiz Center has two punctuation quizzes for beginners and lower intermediate learners. Both quizzes are corrected immediately so students receive instant feedback. Another advantage of sending your students to this site is that they will learn about the other riches available for them in Dave's ESL Café. (One would hope, however, that more punctuation quizzes would be added. Dennis Oliver, are you listening?)

Guide to Grammar and Writing: Punctuation Marks

<http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/marks.htm>
A Guide to Grammar and Writing is a useful site hosted by Capital Community College in Hartford, Connecticut. Choose the page entitled "Punctuation Marks." You will find a "punctuation tree" (*Arboretus punctuationitis*) decorated with punctuation marks as well as a chart with the same marks. Click on any punctuation mark, either on the tree or the chart, to go to a page with valuable information on that mark. For each mark you will find the rules for its usage and multiple-choice quizzes. The quizzes are corrected immediately, and excellent explanations are provided on why an answer is right or wrong.

Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL)

<http://owl.purdue.edu/handouts/print/grammar>
Purdue University's OWL offers a wealth of handouts on various types of punctuation. After studying these handouts, students can access relevant quizzes. These quizzes are not interactive but can be printed out and completed by students. Each quiz has an answer key so students can check their work.

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She can be reached at cfmeloni@hotmail.com. Please write "Networthy" in the subject of e-mail messages. This and past columns can be found online at www.eslmag.com/articles.html.



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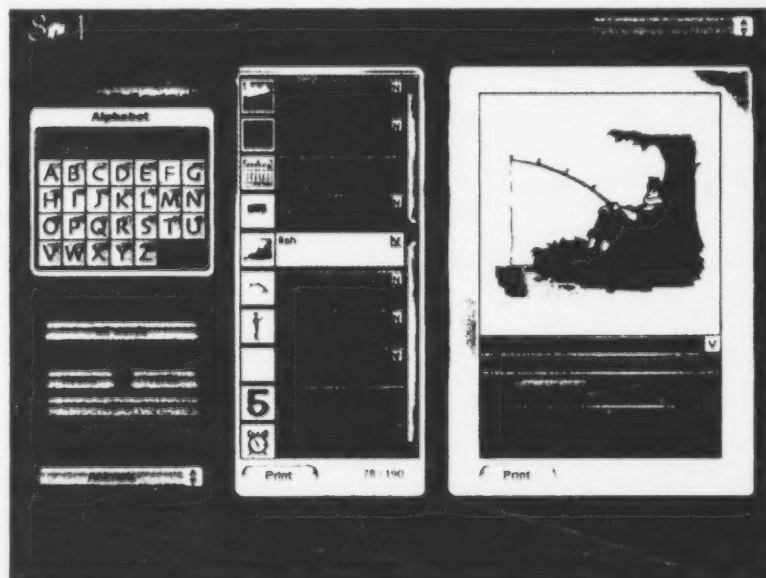
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Working to Make a Difference: An Interview with Dr. James Alatis

BY MARILYN ROSENTHAL, PH.D.

Dr. James Alatis' name is synonymous with that of the TESOL organization (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages). Jim Alatis has always cared about professional development in the field of ESL/EFL, and he has propagated the seeds of that development through TESOL and in his own professional career. Jim, as he is called by almost everyone, was influential in the founding of TESOL, and while he was helping to develop the association, Jim was also running and developing the teacher training programs at Georgetown University, introducing teachers of ESL/EFL to the field of applied linguistics. He started one of the first MAT programs for training ESL/EFL teachers in the country. Of course, Jim was also able to find time for his great passion, teaching Greek.

To put it simply, throughout four decades of service to the ESL/EFL profession, Jim Alatis has made a difference. His vision, energy, professionalism, and enthusiasm for the field, all with a smile, lead TESOL to create the prestigious Alatis Award. And Jim is still making a difference. After 21 years at the executive level for TESOL, Jim is now the interim president of TIRF, the TESOL International Research Foundation. Enjoy as you read this candid interview with one of our profession's most influential contributors.

Dr. Alatis, you have been very influential in your years of service to TESOL and the profession of teaching ESL/EFL. How did you begin your career in this field?

I began my career as a graduate student at the Ohio State University in 1953, at which time I taught English to adult foreign students. Then from 1955 to 1957, I became a Fulbright Professor of Linguistics and English as a Foreign Language at the University of Athens in Greece. Then in 1959, I was appointed English Teaching and Testing Specialist for the U.S. Department of State. In that capacity, I was instrumental in launching the

TOEFL [Test of English of as Foreign Language]. All of this proved to be a valuable foundation for my future endeavors.

Tell us about the founding of TESOL: What was your role? Who else was involved? What were the goals of the organization?

TESOL was founded in 1966 with the support of five professional organizations: the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), the Speech Association of America (SAA), the Modern Language Association (MLA),

and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

I became the first executive secretary by invitation of Harold B. Allen, TESOL's first president. At that time I was associate dean of the School of Languages and Linguistics (SLL) at Georgetown University. The university, with the support of Dr. Robert Lado, then dean of SLL and first vice-president of TESOL, released me for one-third time so that I could work on TESOL.

The organization was created out of professional concern over the lack of a single, all-inclusive professional organization that might bring together

teachers and administrators at all educational levels with an interest in English to speakers of other languages (ESOL). TESOL's initial goals were to satisfy the need for a professional organization that would be permanently devoted to the problems of teaching English to speakers of other languages by establishing a professional journal and providing a register of specialists that would be helpful to government agencies, universities, and foundations.

There were three ad-hoc conferences before TESOL officially became an organization. These were held in Tucson, Arizona, San Diego, California, and New York City with participants numbering roughly 700, 800, and 900 respectively. At the third ad-hoc conference in New York, a constitution and a slate of officers were presented and approved, thus launching TESOL as an organization. The first president was Harold B. Allen, the first vice president was Dr. Robert Lado and the second vice-president and program chair was David P. Harris.

TESOL had 337 members in March of 1966, our first year. The first TESOL Convention was held in Miami Beach, Florida, in April of 1967. Ms. Sirarpi Ohannessian of the Center for Applied Linguistics with support from Charles Ferguson were among the primary movers.

The first editor of *TESOL Quarterly* was Dr. Betty Wallace Robinett. The first editor of the *TESOL Newsletter* was Mr. Alfred Aarons of the Dade County Public Schools. Both of these colleagues were volunteers and received no remuneration. I was also a volunteer. The money that was paid for my one-third time service went directly to Georgetown and not to me personally.

In 1968, there were only five TESOL affiliates. When I stepped down as executive director in 1987, there were about 12,000 members and about 60 affiliates, evenly split between international and domestic ones.

Currently TESOL has over 14,000 members representing 122 different countries (as of January 2002). As of December 2000, TESOL was affiliated with 93 independent organizations (42 in the United States and 51 outside the United States) with a total membership of more than 40,000 professionals.

What was your biggest professional challenge during your 21 years as TESOL executive secretary?

I would have to say that my biggest professional challenge was keeping the young, struggling association alive and kicking. The idea was to increase the dues-paying membership in order to make the organization financially viable. In addition to dues, the most important revenue source was the annual convention. It was important that these conventions be well-attended.

Progressively each year we were astounded by the increase in participants. In the attempt to further augment the organization's income, it was

necessary additional revenue. Further, the TESOL newsletter, now *TESOL Matters*, became more professional under the aegis and leadership of Helen Kornblum. But these two last achievements were after my time. As to increasing membership, the creation of more and more new affiliates in the U.S. and abroad and the increase in interest sections gave impetus to a steady growth in membership. The key concept was to provide increased services in spite of a rather small central office staff. In the early days, this was provided primarily by me as a part-time executive director and by Carol Leclair. A field services coordinator, a publications manager, and an accountant were later added.

What are the differences between the TESOL of today and the one of 1966? How have the goals of the organization changed?

Essentially the goals of the organization have not changed. They still involve service to teachers at all levels of instruction throughout the world. In addition to the basic services of the convention, the *Quarterly*, *TESOL Matters*, the Publication Program, interest sections and affiliates, and the TESOL guidelines for teacher preparation, there has been an expansion of the employment clearinghouse, legislative monitoring and public information functions.

In a nutshell, however, today's TESOL is breaking new ground in completing Standards such as K-12, teacher education, workplace, adult education and intensive English programs. The Board is also more focused on issues of the profession rather than the management of the association itself.

TESOL recently received its first significant grant of over \$600,000 from the U.S. Department of Education to do teacher training implementing the K-12 TESOL Standards. There is also more of a global focus to emphasize that TESOL is international.

Tell us about the TESOL award in your name.

The Alatis Award was established by the Board of Directors to acknowledge outstanding and extended service by TESOL members at international, regional, and local levels. Recipients



important that we provide adequate services. In addition to the central office and the convention, it was important that the *Quarterly* and the *Newsletter* be placed on a firm footing. Beyond this, affiliates, interest groups, and a revenue-producing publications program became our priorities.

What was your biggest accomplishment in that role?

Increasing membership and participation in the conventions were goals that were reached with remarkable success. The publications program took a little longer, and it was not until the advent of Dr. Jack Richards as chairman of the Publications Committee that the publications program began to provide the

exemplify the following characteristics: a genuine and long-lasting vision of what TESOL is and can be, the ability to combine professional and administrative roles in TESOL organizations, the ability and desire to represent and promote TESOL, efficiency, personal dynamism, and good cheer. I was deeply gratified by the honor extended to me in this regard.

Where do you see yourself in TESOL in the next five years?

I hope to continue in my emeritus status and to participate in the annual convention, at the plenary and awards session, and to help in any way that I can with publicizing, promoting, and supporting the organization and the profession in every way possible.

What are your current goals for TESOL?

I would hope that the organization would continue in its service orientation and in its pursuit of academic professionalization. Many years ago, with the help of the late Peter Strevens of IATEFL [International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language], I came up with a concept of a "liquidity ratio of one." This meant that we should try to build the organization's financial reserves to the point that it could operate for at least one year using contingency funds equivalent to one year's operating budget. In my day, this meant, with a million dollar annual operating budget, we should hold in reserve a million dollars of contingency money to meet any unforeseen disaster or abrupt financial decline.

While I congratulate the organization for its recent \$600,000 grant, contingency funds should be garnered from private, philanthropic, eleemosynary sources. Of course, the organization should continue its fund raising efforts for special projects pertinent to the organization's mission.

We understand that you were influential in the formation of TIRF. When and how did TIRF begin? What are its goals? Who are its major contributors?

TIRF was formally incorporated in February of 1999. However, TESOL's Association Advancement Committee spent several years beforehand articulating the need for TIRF and bringing the proposal to the TESOL Board.

Actually, it was my good friend and colleague Dr. Russell Campbell's vision and the TESOL Board's strong

leadership that helped get TIRF off the ground. Among the early leaders in the TIRF initiative were Dr. Richard Tucker and Professor Joan Morley. On the TESOL side, Professor Kathi Bailey (and others) provided great leadership and support. TESOL provided TIRF with \$110,000 of seed money.

TIRF's goal is to generate new knowledge about English language teaching and learning domestically and abroad. So far we have received contributions from a major publisher, distinguished authors, leading experts in the field of ESL/ESL, and the general TESOL community. We invite everyone to visit our website [www.tirfonline.org] to learn more about this exciting new venture. Currently, no existing organization or agency, public or private, is uniquely concerned with improving the quality of English language learning and teaching through basic research.

What has been accomplished through TIRF so far?

In February of 2001, TIRF held an Invitational Research Priorities Conference in Alexandria, Virginia. The aim of the conference was to prioritize a research agenda for TIRF. The conference was organized by Richard Tucker, Kathi Bailey, and Donald Freeman and included representatives from the government, internationally recognized language scholars, and non-profit organizations. For a full list of participants, visit our website. The most recent edition of the *TESOL Quarterly* includes a series of articles that came out of that groundbreaking conference.

What are the research priorities for the future?

The kinds of projects that TIRF will initially fund will depend on budgetary constraints. TIRF's Research Committee has identified a number of research projects. In a first phase, TIRF will commission studies in five key areas:

1. The age of introduction of English and intensity of instruction in relation to student proficiency. This will entail a multi-site study in at least five different countries. Concurrently, investigators will seek to evaluate the impact of national investments in English language teaching in these countries.

2. The relationship between teacher proficiency in English and student achievement as seen in at least three instructional settings and linguistic environments, when age and intensi-

ty of instruction are constant.

3. The effects of technology on student proficiency in relation to availability and use of computers and other electronic media, technical competence of teachers and quality of instructional software.

4. Best teaching practices and curriculum models for the preparation of Generation 1.5 young adults [long-term immigrant] in higher education settings in North America. This investigation will consist of a multi-site study comparing, for example, practices and performance among students in selected schools in California and British Columbia.

5. The impact and validity of standardized proficiency testing and other forms of assessment for limited English proficient students in secondary and tertiary school settings in the U.S.

How is TIRF making a difference in the field of teaching English?

TIRF is making a difference by focusing attention on the research component of our field and articulating the necessity to fund such research for future improvements to language programs and the teaching and learning of English.

Tell us about your additional current professional endeavors.

In addition to being the interim president of TIRF, I am presently teaching courses in methodology of language teaching, bilingualism, and English as a world language. I also teach intensive beginning modern Greek and supervise intermediate and advanced classes. I am co-director of the National Capital Language Resource Center with Dr. Anna Chamot. My most recent enthusiasm is "to do my ethnic thing" and participate in the development of modern Greek as a heritage language through various evening, afternoon, and weekend schools throughout the Washington area and the nation with the cooperation of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and, through the Greek Embassy, the Greek National Government.

What changes do you see ahead for the teaching of ESL/EFL?

Much more action research seems to be in the offing regarding the social, regional, and functional varieties of the English language. Cooperation with other organizations with analogous concerns such as the International Association of World Englishes seems to be a direction in which the profes-

sion is going. We should continue in our efforts to maintain a language competent American society and prepare world-class teachers. We should continue to insist upon quality above all.

What other question would you ask and answer for our readers?

I would ask myself, "What should be the personal and professional mission of TESOL members and the organization?"

My answer? As are all things having to do with quality instruction, teacher education is the heart of the matter. The goal of teachers is to provide their students with the highest quality instruction possible. This can be done only if the teachers are themselves well educated and continue to develop professionally throughout their lives. "And gladly will he learn and gladly teach," Chaucer told us about a good teacher. This involves learning and teaching in perpetuity. Our kind of teaching, which accepts other peoples' languages and cultures as equally valid to ours, is essential to the cross-cultural communication, mutual educational exchange, social justice, and, ultimately, it is devoutly to be wished, world peace.

Good teaching of any kind takes

place when competent teachers with non-defensive personalities use learner-centered methods, approaches, and techniques, and cherish their students. We need culturally sensitive, linguistically sophisticated, and pedagogically sound teachers to meet the challenges of our increasingly complex and challenging world. These are the kinds of teachers that belong to TESOL and continue to strive in their efforts to serve their students. Membership in TESOL is essential to perpetual professional and personal growth. This is,

and always has been, the personal and professional mission of TESOL members and their organization.

James Alatis, Ph.D., is dean emeritus in the School of Languages and Linguistics, Distinguished Professor of Linguistics and Modern Greek, and director of the Title VII MAT Program in ESOL and Bilingual Education at Georgetown University.

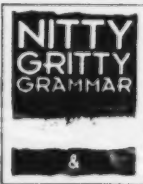
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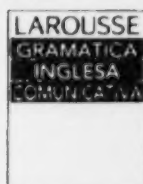
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More New Technologies for Language Learning

This column is second in a series of four that describes new technologies that may affect the future of language learning. In the case of the technologies discussed here (and the wireless sub-notebooks and tablet PCs discussed last time), "new" means available but not yet ubiquitous in schools and language programs. It is important for ESL/EFL teachers to be aware of what these technologies can do, so that they can decide whether and when they are needed, rather than having them mandated by others.

Electronic Books: Many educators, especially those who value the page-turning, take-it-to-bed, mark-it-up wonderfulness of paper books, have quickly dismissed online books. However, the advent of handheld technologies and improvements in reader software not only allow learners to download and store texts cheaply, they also allow learners to make oral and written comments while they read (see, for example, the ebook reader by Adobe at <http://www.adobe.com/products/ebookreader/main.html>). For students and programs with small book budgets, this might be a valid solution. Electronic books and readers allow learners to read anywhere and have a wider range of reading choices (and thereby language input). They also encourage intentional cognition while reading.

Voice Recognition Software: Many software programs currently have text to speech and/or speech to text capabilities. Storybook Weaver Deluxe (MECC), Kid Pix Studio (Broderbund), and other software packages use this technology with some success. Two of the clearest and most reliable are Dragon Systems Naturally Speaking (Lernout & Hauspie, <http://www.lhsl.com/naturallyspeaking>) and IBM's ViaVoice (<http://www-3.ibm.com/software/speech>). These software packages, which work with word processors, Web browsers, and other programs, allow users to use the computer via voice commands, surf the Web without keyboarding, and dictate papers and other compositions. Like the tablet PCs mentioned in my last column, voice recognition software lets users work without keyboarding skills, facilitates practice of multi-modal production skills, and provides learners with opportunities to use the skills in which they have strengths.

If used effectively and efficiently, one or more of these technologies may help create an optimum language-learning environment. In the next column, I'll tell you about technologies currently under development.

Joy Egbert teaches ESL and technology at Washington State University and can be reached at jegbert@wsu.edu.

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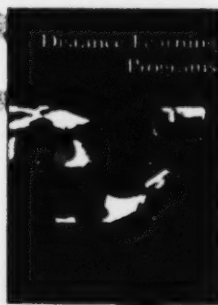
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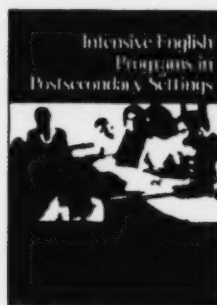
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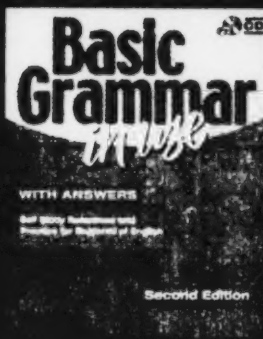
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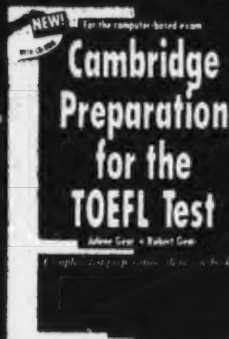
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FROM LESSONS TO LIFE: Authentic Materials Bridge the Gap

BY MARIA SPELLERI

Teaching ESL to adults means being awed everyday as we witness the tenacity and perseverance of immigrants carving out better lives for themselves and their families. Teachers owe it to their overworked and often culture-shocked students to use classroom time as effectively as possible, keeping in mind that while the teacher may want to be in that classroom next year, the student hopes to have learned and moved on with his life by then. For the adult learner, the language is merely a tool, not an end in itself. Adults are driven to learn based on their needs (Knowles, 1973), and ESL teachers are in the needs fulfillment business. Fortunately for teachers, almost all adult ESL students have two similar needs: to learn English and to adapt to their new community.

Using authentic materials as teaching tools in the ESL class is one way to make effective and efficient use of adult

learners' time by directly addressing their critical needs. There are many definitions in the debate over what constitutes "authentic materials" (Taylor, 1994), but here authentic materials refers to any items created for the general community and not specifically for the ESL community. Authentic materials offer real language that is contextually rich and culturally pertinent. They also provide insights into the adult learners' new community and the services and opportunities it offers.

Real Life Means High Interest

ESL learners like authentic materials. As adults, they recognize the significance of these items and how key they are to real life problems and tasks. At some levels of learning, it is impossible to separate linguistic needs from the learner's survival needs, so it makes sense to try to approach both simultaneously through authentic materials. These materials have a high interest value because of their relevance and because there are at

least three layers of learning embedded within them: language learning (the structure and vocabulary), cultural insights (think about what a city government complaint form or an announcement for confidential AIDS testing say about a culture), and practical application (using the item in the way it was intended—to benefit oneself and one's family; e.g., planning a birthday party in a public park once the amenities, rules and hours of the park have been discovered.)

Focusing on items of immediate relevance and high interest may make a difference when work, family and other obligations compete with English class for the learner's time. If the adult learner is finding immediate benefit from his study, in other words, improvements in his life outside the classroom are ongoing and not put off to the future, it may help reduce program drop-out rates and ease that tiresome (for both teachers and students) cycle of drop-out/re-registration.

Text books and the sheltered language they provide have their place in the classroom, but there is a gap between communicative competence as measured in text book tasks and as needed by the adult who has to fulfill his roles as employee, parent, and community member. Authentic materials can customize what text books have to make generic because of mass marketing considerations. Printed materials from the community reflect the learners' reality and bridge the gap from the classroom lesson to real life by incorporating names, places, events, and factual information that can actually be used by the learner to enrich his life, completely aside from initial benefits of language learning.

Text books don't leave sheltered language behind until the advanced level, if even then. Yet adult learners face a daily onslaught of unsheltered language that they can't always ignore. Learners have to deal with the language of brochures, announcements, maps, forms, applications, guidelines and schedules, so they should be reckoned with in their complete, unsheltered state in the classroom. Exposure to authentic language means



that prediction skills will be honed and that learners will improve their strategies for dealing with uncertainty. These skills and strategies can be spotlighted and built upon by the teacher to achieve much faster results than would naturally occur if the learner were just coming across the authentic material and unconsciously developing strategies on his own, outside of class.

The Role of the Teacher

True authentic materials are unedited and remain unsimplified in any way. They require the teacher to act as a filter, releasing the language in manageable quantities, raising or lowering the filter as needed, and ensuring the comprehensibility of the material through selection of the learning objective, the task to be accomplished, and the way the material is approached. But the teacher using authentic materials has other responsibilities, too. He must also learn how to identify authentic items, or determine their "applicability and adaptability" for classroom use (Dumitrescu, 2000). (See sidebar).

Very importantly, the teacher is a culture guide. In fact, language may often take a back seat to culture with authentic materials, resulting in a hybrid "ESL in the content area of culture," but as Krashen points out "comprehensible subject-matter teaching is language teaching" (1985, p. 16). Even something as innocuous as a day's worth of junk mail illustrates how every authentic item is a conduit of cultural information: a culture of consumerism and marketing is revealed in coupons and store ads, a culture of philanthropy in requests for donations for veterans and endangered wildlife, and a culture of violence in flyers asking, "Have you seen this child?"

An unexpected role that teachers using authentic materials sometimes have to fulfill is that of sympathetic, non-judgmental listener. The frank reality of some authentic items can lead to personal disclosures or discussion of touchy topics. For example, one adult class was looking at a booklet that listed the social service agencies in their town. These included Alcoholics Anonymous, a rape crisis center, family and marriage counseling and other agencies that people turn to in times of trouble. During the lesson, learners began to talk about family members who had problems and sometimes even talked about their own problems. Despite the teacher's attempt to steer away from personalization, it soon became clear that the learners were running the conversation and were intent on "unburdening" themselves—in

English. They were interested in the language needed to express their concerns and were also clearly intrigued to learn of the existence of these services.

Teaching with Authentic Materials

Once an applicable and adaptable item has been identified, the presentation of the item can be a challenge, especially for teachers or tutors with little experience or training. The following guidelines describe the components necessary for using authentic materials successfully.

► **"Learner-Centered" is the Mantra.** From the selection of materials, to the choice of objectives, to the tasks of learning itself, the needs and interests as well as the range of affective issues pertaining to the learners must be in the forefront. This doesn't mean that a large portion of the input can't be teacher-generated, in fact, with many authentic materials it has to be. But think of how the learner views the item, how the learner might want to use the item, and what tasks society expects the learner to be able to perform that pertain to that item.

► **Identify an Objective.** Any objective needs to be feasible within the $i + 1$ range of the learners, that is, the level of language complexity just slightly beyond the learners' current ability. The teacher also has to consider her ability to make the material comprehensible to achieve the objective at that $i + 1$ level. Only parts or a single "layer" of an item need be an objective for a lesson, in which case extraneous information can be disregarded.

For example, one newspaper insert on children's summer camps in our area lists at least thirty camps, each with a paragraph of description. It also has a map, human interest sidebars, and a matrix comparing costs and schedules—an extraordinary amount of information.

A lexical objective could be to compare activities at the different camps. A "life-skill" objective could be using the map to identify camps close to each learner's neighborhood.

A critical thinking objective would be to generate a list of questions that parents might have that are not answered in a camp description. Reading comprehension objectives don't always have to be used with printed materials. Consider how a native speaker might use the item to become informed, enriched or review options and make choices. Having a precise objective to act as a guiding star is essential when facing such a wealth of linguistic and cultural input.

Sample Criteria for Selecting Authentic Materials

Applicability

- The material gives the learner new information to help herself or her family. (For example, a small poster on Florida snakes from the Poison Control Center.)

or

- The material enables the learner to take advantage of an existing community service or amenity that had not been previously utilized or fully utilized. (For example, information and a schedule about children's programs at the library.)

and

- The material reflects a reality that is economically feasible for the learner. (For example, flyers for new pizza parlors and mini-golf rather than casino cruises.)
- The material respects the immigration status of the learner, whether documented or undocumented. (The undocumented immigrant should not find himself in trouble for attempting to make use of knowledge gathered from the authentic materials.)

Adaptability

- The authentic material contains non-complex vocabulary: A large amount of the printed matter marketed to the general public is written at a fifth grade level while the language of items produced by public safety and social welfare offices is sometimes even simpler.

And at least one of the following:

- The authentic item features pictures, diagrams, tables, etc.
- The material uses bullets, titling, subtitles or other clear separation of text.
- The material allows some learner interaction: a form to fill out, a recording to listen to, a checklist, questions to think about, etc.

► **Concept and Context.** When using authentic materials, teachers have to determine if they are working on a concept that is new to many learners. For example, a class consisting of young mothers may be exposed to a new concept in a pamphlet on child-proofing the home. For others, using a checkbook or a two-for-one coupon is a new concept. New concepts mean there is no direct background experience to build on and the teacher will have to search laterally in the learners' lives to build a meaningful context for the new concept.

For concepts that are already familiar, the task at hand is to develop a rich and relevant context that highlights the relationship between the authentic item and the learner's life. This will facilitate the transfer of the learner's existing knowledge and capabilities from his first to his second language. Time spent on context-setting is an opportunity to indirectly (or directly) pre-teach the most vital, stumbling-block vocabulary the learners are about to face so they can better concentrate on the message and usefulness of the material once they are involved in activities.

► **Make It Comprehensible.** Everything boils down to comprehensibility. If the input is not comprehended,

regardless of how applicable and adaptable it is, it "appears to serve no greater purpose to the learner than does language that is never heard" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p. 197). The teacher is the interpreter between the authentic material and the learner, and will likely use a repertoire of paraphrase, synonyms, quick sketches, miming and pictures to get the message across—for it is the message, not the structure, that is the focus of authentic materials. The safety net, the controlled language of the text book, is no longer available, and the only control of the authentic materials comes from the pace and "comprehensibility filtering" of the teacher and the format and objectives of the lesson.

Authentic materials become a way of life for some ESL teachers—they're the ones grabbing all the free press from the library lobby, begging local companies for blank job applications, and swiping extra patient information forms from their doctors' offices. These teachers have found that authentic materials are a logical and efficient way to combine their learners' needs for language input, culture study, and information on how to access and participate in their local community. Learners can bridge the gap from lessons to life with facili-

tated exposure to authentic material by making immediate use of classroom lessons in their lives. Experiencing these on-going lifestyle improvements may keep the learners motivated to continue language studies.

Maria M. Spelleri (M. Ed. TESOL) is owner of English Solutions, program coordinator of the Literacy Council of Sarasota, Florida, and has been teaching and designing specialty curricula for 15 years in the U.S. and Europe.

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Richard Firsten
The Grammar Guy

Future Frustration

Dear Grammar Guy: I get frustrated over the word *will*. I teach intermediate ESL and always come up against the same problem. My students use *will* in every future sentence they make. They say things like, "What will you do tonight?" and "I'll go to Wendy's for lunch." They're talking about the future, so it seems *will* is okay to use, but it sounds wrong. I just can't put my finger on why. Can you tackle this one? Thanks.

—Joyce Sarkisian, Los Angeles, CA

Dear Joyce:

Talk about a coincidence! Your question arrived at the perfect time to go along with the "Food for Thought" question in my last column. Students learn that *will* is the modal that carries future time, so it's no wonder they want to use it whenever they refer to the future. The problem is that *will* not only carries future time, but it also carries some other meanings. I have to be brief in my answers, so I'll just touch on two main meanings.

Will is used to make a kind of promise: *I'll help you in a few minutes. / They say they'll be back in a little while.* It's also used to make a prediction: *The weatherman says it'll rain tonight. / They won't pass the test if they don't study.* That's why the sentences your students create sound wrong to you; they don't mean to be making a promise or prediction. The most common way English speakers express the future is by using the present progressive (present continuous). The example sentences you sent sound much better if we say, "What are

you doing tonight?" and "I'm going to Wendy's for lunch." We can also rely on the phrase *be going to*: *What are you going to do tonight? / I'm going to go to Wendy's for lunch.*

I hope this helps, Joyce, and thanks for the question.

Here's the answer to our "Food for Thought" question from last issue, which was sent in by Victoria Denault of Boston, MA. The question was "How many ways does English have to express the future?" Victoria writes, "I came up with seven ways to express the future—although I've probably missed something. They are *will*, *be going to*, present continuous, simple present, future progressive, future perfect, and the expression 'be about to.' I hope I got them all."

Great job, Victoria! You've hit on all of the main ways to express futurity in English. You left out two marginal future expressions, though, which are "be due" (A: *They should be here soon, right?* B: *Yeah, they're due in just a few minutes.*) and "be to" (*She is to report to Mr. Dean tomorrow at 9:30 a.m.*). So the answer's really nine.

Here's our "Food for Thought" for next time: Is it okay to say, "I saw last night a good movie on TV about spies?" If not, what's wrong with it? Send your "Food for Thought" answers or other grammar questions by 4/30 to ESLGrammarGuy@aol.com or Grammar Guy c/o *ESL Magazine*, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD, 21401.

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer, and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida.

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Marganne Box is director of Kansas City Adult Basic Education, Kansas City, Missouri, School District.

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TESOL's P-12 Teacher Education Standards Are Here!

BY CANDACE HARPER

Following two years of development, public review, and revision, the P-12 ESL Teacher Education Standards—a project of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)—have been completed. These new standards specify the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of effective ESL teachers and are the latest in a series of efforts by TESOL to provide performance-based standards to guide the policy and practice of educating English language learners in the United States. In 1997 TESOL published the Pre-K-12 ESL Standards, specifying what ESL students at different grade and English language proficiency levels should know and be able to do in English as the result of high quality ESL instruction. In 1998 TESOL produced an accompanying assessment document, and in 1999 TESOL entered into collaboration with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to develop teacher education standards for ESL. (NCATE uses the abbreviation P for pre-kindergarten, rather than Pre-K).

The TESOL standards initiatives are part of the national move toward educational reform, following the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in

1983 (a Report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education) and the passage of Goals 2000 (signed into law by then President Clinton in 1994), which set the objective of high levels of achievement in the content areas for all learners. In an effort to ensure that ESL learners were included in this objective, TESOL joined the group of

guide the preparation of P-12 ESL teachers.

The Development Process

The task force assembled for the teacher education standards project consisted of ESL teachers and administrators at the P-12 level as well as teacher educators at the postsecondary level. As a teacher educator involved in the preparation of ESL teachers at the graduate level and of preservice elementary teachers pursuing an ESL endorsement at a large state university, I was happy to have the opportunity to contribute to this project. I felt that the development of these standards was an important step in helping to establish ESL as a professional discipline. I believed it would be helpful to have a document articulating the specialized body of knowledge and skills of effective ESL teachers, not only for use in the evaluation



core disciplines (science, math, social studies, foreign language, and English language arts) in outlining curriculum and principles of instruction in the form of national content-area standards for teachers. In the fall of 1999, the organization established a task force to develop a set of performance-based standards that would

of teacher education programs (as with the NCATE accreditation process), but also as a guide in the development of new ESL teacher education programs. In an era of rapid changes and large-scale school reform, it seemed important for the ESL profession to affirm its professional identity and role in the

education of English language learners.

Throughout the development of the ESL teacher education standards, the task force made efforts to ensure that the draft standards reflected current views on language teaching and included a wide range of voices. The task force also consulted related standards documents (e.g., the Elementary Education Standards, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, etc.) In January of 2001 the draft standards were posted on the TESOL website for public review and feedback and were presented at state and regional conferences around the United States to encourage participant input. All of the feedback was considered and incorporated into the standards whenever possible. In the fall of 2001 the review period ended and the draft standards were prepared for publication.

Although the teacher education standards are considered complete, the task force realizes that any set of standards must continually evolve to reflect changing views and practices regarding the education of students learning English as a second language. The content of the new standards reflects current views and best practice in the field of P-12 ESL.

Content of the Standards

The TESOL P-12 ESL Teacher Education Standards are structured around five domains: language, culture, instruction, assessment and professionalism. While each of the five domains represents a distinct conceptual area, each of the five domains is interdependent with the other. That is, culture, language, instruction, assessment, and professionalism intersect and form the complex body

of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that characterize the ESL teaching profession. Standards within each domain specify what teachers should know, be able to do, and be predisposed to do in working effectively with ESL learners. Performance indicators for each standard provide examples of performance-based criteria at three different levels: "approaches standard," "meets standard," and "exceeds standard." It is expected that a teacher who "exceeds standard" would be ready to apply for National Board for Professional Teacher Standards certification in the area of "English as a New Language." Throughout the document, teachers are referred to as "candidates" as the standards will be used by NCATE in their accreditation process for ESL teacher education programs in colleges and universities. Together, these five domains provide the foundational knowledge and skills that new teachers need to be successful teachers of English to speakers of other languages.

The Language Domain

The first domain, language, consists of two standards. The first standard deals with candidates' understanding of language as a system. Candidates need to understand the components of language and the ways in which the languages and dialects of their students may vary. Candidates need to be able to identify the ways in which written and spoken language differ and apply this understanding to help ESOL students from diverse language backgrounds acquire and use English for academic and social purposes. The second standard deals with teacher candidates' understanding of and ability to apply concepts related to the process of language

acquisition. Candidates need to be able to create an interactive, comprehensible, language-rich learning environment to foster first and second language and literacy development among their ESOL students. Candidates should understand the role of personal and affective variables in language learning and use that understanding to establish secure, motivating classrooms.

The Culture Domain

Culture, the second domain, includes two standards that address the major concepts, theories, and research related to the nature and role of culture, cultural identity, and migration/immigration. Teacher candidates will be able to apply this knowledge in constructing learning environments that support ESOL students' language and literacy development and content-area achievement. Performance indicators in this domain reflect such topics as the nature of culture, values, beliefs and expectations, cultural relativism, the impact of prejudice and racism, family structure and roles, communication systems, and learning styles.

The Instruction Domain

In the third domain, planning and managing instruction, teacher candidates need to demonstrate that they can plan for, manage, and implement standards-based ESL and content instruction. Candidates plan and teach to content and language objectives using resources effectively. Candidates also give special attention to student proficiency level, learning style, amount of formal schooling, and special needs (including gifted and talented). Candidates need to be able to present materials in meaningful ("top-down") ways while also

Standards for Teacher Education

The TESOL P-12 ESL Teacher Education Standards are structured around five interrelated domains:

- **Language**—two standards relating to knowledge of language systems and language acquisition.
- **Culture**—two standards relating to the role of culture in language learning and constructing learning environments.
- **Instruction**—three standards relating to the learning environment and planning and implementing student-

centered activities and materials for language and content instruction.

- **Assessment**—three standards relating to ESL assessment issues, language proficiency assessment, and classroom-based assessment.
- **Professionalism**—three standards relating to knowledge of the history of the profession, advocacy for students, and professional collaboration.

giving balanced attention to formal ("bottom-up") skills such as using grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary accurately.

The Assessment Domain

The fourth domain, assessment, has three standards: ESL assessment issues (such as various purposes for assessment and issues of cultural bias), language proficiency assessment, and classroom-based assessment for ESL learners. Within these standards, teacher candidates need to understand the differences between "authentic" and performance-based assessments and traditional forms of assessment (e.g., multiple choice, true/false items). They need to be able to use various types of assessment to determine growth and progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and understand how these skills are integrated. They also need to be able to assess English language learners' content-area achievement independently of their English language ability and to adapt classroom assessment tools and tasks for learners at varying levels of proficiency. Candidates also need to understand and use their knowledge of the interdependent nature of teaching and assessment as they promote and measure student learning.

The Professionalism Domain

The fifth domain, professionalism, consists of three standards broadly defined as professional attributes of effective ESL teachers. The standards address candidates' knowledge of the history of the ESL teaching field (e.g., an understanding of the evolution of local, state, and national laws and policy in serving ESL students and an understanding of trends in methods and approaches to ESL instruction), their ability to serve as professional resources to non-ESL colleagues, their advocacy for language minority students and their families, and their collaboration with all school staff to improve learning for ESOL students.

Implementation of the Standards

The performance-based nature of the standards may make implementation challenging for teacher education programs that are applying for NCATE accreditation and are accus-

tomed to compiling evidence solely in the form of syllabi and faculty résumés. Programs must show not only that these skills have been taught, but that they have been learned. In addition to paper documentation such as course assignments and other assessments, institutions must show evidence that graduates of their ESL teacher education programs are able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that have been identified within each standard.

For example, in order to show that its teacher candidates meet the standard under performance indicator 1.b.3, "Provide opportunities for meaningful interaction," an institution would need to provide evidence that their graduates "structure regular pair and cooperative group activities to allow ESOL students to practice using language to negotiate meaning." Evidence of meeting the performance indicator criteria in real life settings might take the form of documented observations, peer assessments, reflective journals, or other outcome-based data.

It is hoped that the TESOL P-12 ESL Teacher Education Standards will be used not only as a vehicle for NCATE program accreditation in ESL, but also as a tool for self-evaluation and program development. In preparing to show that their programs meet the ESL Teacher Education Standards, institutions should address the following questions: 1) Are our graduates meeting these standards? 2) If so, how do our graduates demonstrate the specified knowledge, skills, and dispositions? 3) If not, how can we improve their pre-service experience so that this body

of professional competence is developed?

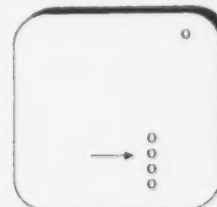
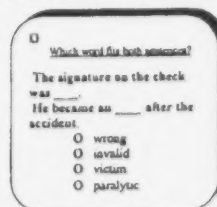
The TESOL Teacher Education Standards have been approved by the TESOL Board of Directors and by the Executive Board of NCATE. Guidelines for the implementation of the standards for NCATE accreditation of programs have been developed, and the standards will first be used officially in institutional program reviews in the spring of 2003. TESOL will provide expert reviewers for the NCATE accreditation review process. The first workshop to assist campus representatives in preparing for an NCATE review using the new standards will take place at the 2002 TESOL convention in Salt Lake City. For more information on this workshop and on the P-12 ESL Teacher Education Standards and other TESOL standards, check the TESOL website at www.tesol.org.

Candace Harper is assistant professor in ESL in the College of Education at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

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Who Am I?

Issues of Language, Culture and Identity for Native Americans

BY WILLIAM DEMMERT

Issues of language, culture and identity are closely integrated in the minds of many Native American peoples with whom I have worked over the past 40 years. These are issues that English language teachers must be sensitive to and address in their classrooms, especially for those English language learners whose new language and culture threaten to eclipse their first language and culture.

In regard to the importance and relationship of identity, language and culture, several views exist. Among some Native educators and leaders, identity and language are synonymous: you don't have one without the other (i.e., you are not a real Tlingit if you do not know the language). A contrasting view among a select few is that culture and identity are closely aligned with but are not synonymous with language. This view also recognizes that language is an important communication tool and that languages and cultures change over time. A third view among a small minority is that Native languages are no longer important because of their limited use in the world of today.

Current Views on Developing Native Languages

English is currently the first language of most young Native children preparing for school in the United States. There are exceptions among some rural Alaskan Native, Navajo, Lakota, and other isolated tribal groups. Among parents of Native students interested in promoting Native lan-

guage development, a controversial question to answer during the development of a young child's language base is whether Native languages should be learned as a first or second language (in relationship to learning English) or whether children should be exposed to both languages from the start, a truly bilingual approach. A second question

elders, and as a way of better understanding oral histories and legends of the past. Names and words may have a story behind them and in order to fully understand the meaning of the word you must know the story.

Losing a Link to the Past

Several years ago my father was having a conversation with his mother in the Tlingit language, and during this conversation my grandmother unconsciously reverted to an older form of the language. After listening and concentrating on what his mother was saying, my father interrupted and said, "I haven't understood a word you've said in the last few minutes." His mother stopped talking, reflected for a few minutes, laughed aloud, and said, "No wonder, I've been talking in ancient Tlingit."

I asked my father what this meant, and whether there were any people still alive that knew that early version of the language. He stated that it was a very old language known only by a few of the elders that were still alive, that the language was no longer used in any of the Tlingit communities, and that he had never heard it nor did he know of it until his mother had used it on that one occasion.

I had an opportunity to relate this incident to George Lewis, an elder in the Tlingit community years later. He told me that he was one of the few people alive that still knew that language but had not used it since he was a young man, for he had no one to talk to that also knew the language.

My father and my grandmother



is what should the role of school be in Native language and cultural development.

I recognize Native language development as an important part of one's cultural identity, as a necessary tool for learning and communicating with

have long since retired to another place. According to traditional Tlingit belief, they would have been reincarnated and returned as a new member of the immediate or extended family or clan with only oral histories and legend to link them to the past. As far as I know this ancient form of the Tlingit language is lost, and the number of individuals that know contemporary Tlingit are decreasing at an alarming rate. I would expect that along with this decrease in the number of Tlingit language speakers vocabularies and levels of speech are also declining. Time, changes in sociocultural mores and customs, contemporary innovations and the introduction of new ideas and vocabulary all combine to promote change as part of an ongoing process of linguistic and cultural differences between my grandfather's time and mine.

What do these changes mean to me as an individual, as a Tlingit (with Oglala Sioux heritage) and as an American? A historical perspective sets the context for understanding language change, social/cultural development, and a person's sense of identity and belonging.

A Cultural History

According to my Tlingit grandparents, I am Caw-Goo-Woo, a member of the Naasteidi clan of the Eagle Moiety (tribal subdivision). I am also the son, grandson, and great grandson of the Tak'uanedi, my father's clan.

The Tak'uanedi side is an ancient lineage, one that historically starts with my grandmother's people entering southeast Alaska via Hazy Island (an island off the shores of southeast Alaska) by canoe from the ocean as the mountains began to emerge from the waters (probably the lands appearing as the ice melted during the last ice age). They came from a warmer climate. On my grandfather's side of my Tlingit lineage, my ancestors entered southeast Alaska from the interior over and under the ice and walked on foot to Tonowak Narrows between Heceta Island and Prince of Wales Island where they met with the Tak'uanedi.

The legends and clan histories of my parents, grandparents, and other members of their two moieties, along with physical evidence of these histories and legends in the form of tools, villages, pictographs and petroglyphs, are well established evidence of this ancient lineage. Some of this evidence is as old as the last ice age and goes

back over 10,000 years—and even further if we choose to speculate.

From my understanding of the legends, oral histories, and contemporary scientific evidence, the Tlingit were originally different groups of people that migrated into southeast Alaska at different times to combine as a single people with different clans probably representing the different groups that arrived over time. The contemporary Tlingit language probably emerged as a mix of the different languages from the different groups or survived as the dominant language of one of the early groups. It is a complex language with a highly developed and distinct verb structure. According to Edward Vajda, Professor of Linguistics at Western Washington University, the Tlingit are linguistically related to the Ket people of Siberia.

The earliest known people (or clan within the Tlingit) of southeast Alaska are known as the Kelp (Dowhit/Kelp House) people. They undoubtedly used the caves along the outer coast as their first homes and lived off the plants and animals they found when they first arrived. As salmon, trees, and other plants and animals established themselves over time, each was tested and used as food, some other resource, or not used at all. These early Dowhit people were either part of the original Tak'uanedi clan or merged and became part of that original clan.

Language is a Changing Tool

From what I learned from the exchange between my father and his mother, and from my exchange with George Lewis, the original language used by an earlier Tlingit generation changed during their early childhood. Modern Tlingit emerged as a new language or dialect as time, sociocultural modification, innovations and the introduction of new ideas and vocabulary all combined to require a new tool or means of communication. Unfortunately for me, and for continuing active use of the language, most of my generation learned English as the language of the home and as the language of instruction in the school.

There are individuals (different members of different Native American groups, usually traditional language speakers) that equate identity, membership in a clan or tribe, or being Indian, with a person knowing and using their traditional Native language—a traumatic position for non-Native language speakers to find themselves in, espe-

cially for young Native children whose parents and elders have not promoted development in or use of the language.

For the Tlingit, and I would expect for other Indian or Native groups, it is necessary to understand and appreciate the nature of change and what we must do with that knowledge if we wish to influence that change and maintain use of traditional languages. What does some of that knowledge include? I suggest that at minimum it includes the following:

1) Languages are in a constant state of change with new vocabulary and requirements for use;

2) Traditional Native Languages continue to disappear (no longer in use for whatever reason);

3) The language base of the Tlingit (and probably other tribes and Native groups) has changed over thousands of years and continues to change because of new vocabulary, new use, and new sociocultural requirements;

4) Culture is based on mores and customs of a particular group;

5) Language is a tool to communicate, and one's understanding of that language is based on a person's level of use and experiences; and

6) In order to continue developing a traditional language and promote its use by the next generation, the language must be used in the home, in community activities, and in the larger language community as a means of communication.

Understanding the close relationship between language and culture means that one recognizes the differences between language, mores, and customs. From my perspective, language is a tool for communication, mores are the fundamental beliefs of a group, and customs are activities that a group believes in and practice.

The daily experiences that my great grandfather was exposed to in the oceans and inland waters of southeast Alaska were the same or very similar to the experiences that my grandfather, my father, and I were exposed to. Our appreciation and understanding of these experiences are also very similar (time and innovations making them differ to some degree, but the basic ele-

ments of the ocean, the land, the weather, and the activities themselves are the same). The tool (language) used to describe these experiences may have been significantly different (ancient Tlingit, Tlingit, a combination of Tlingit and English, or English) but our perspectives are closely related. Does this mean that one is more Tlingit than the other? Or does this mean that we are all Tlingit but the tools we use for describing these experiences has changed?

Responding to Changes in Language and Culture

We must be careful that we do not penalize or alienate our youth for the natural changes that occur as our civilizations continue to change and develop. We must also be careful not to alienate our youth and punish them for those things that have changed that we or our parents and grandparents decided. If we wish to maintain certain aspects of our customs, mores, and even language, we must make conscious decisions to practice and honor them and to make sure that our children learn them and appreciate them in the modern context.

Everyone that I know and that I have worked with as a professional

educator focusing on improving academic performance among Native people recognizes the importance of reading, writing, and speaking standard English. This is also true among the Native people living in the Circumpolar North that I have worked (the Sami of Norway, Sweden, and Finland; the Greenland Inuit; the Alaskan Indian, Aleut, and Inuit; the Canadian Indian and Inuit; and the Native peoples of the Arctic Circle in Russia). Equally important is the fact that all also recognized the place Native or heritage languages, culture, and identity play in developing a positive self-image and in improving academic performance.

From my personal perspective, the position of Native educators on language culture and identity is closely associated with the debate over language among other minority groups. Especially language minority groups struggling to succeed in schools that do not provide support for first or heritage languages and that ignore the cultural and identity requirements that are so necessary to developing healthy minds and for motivating students in today's multi-cultural school environment.

The Role of Schools

I believe schools have a critical role in

honoring and promoting language, culture, and identity of the Native and other students they serve. The continued development of any society is dependent upon how well that society educates its youth. The quality of schools and schooling and the level of congruence between the school and the communities of the students served are as closely tied to student success as breathing. Until this is recognized and appreciated, schools will continue to fail large numbers of language minority, limited English speaking, and cultural minority groups such as Native Americans in our nation's schools.

From my experience, issues of language, culture and identity are closely tied to our sense of self and our personal well-being. Our success in school, in our community, and in the larger world depends upon our understanding and application of these relationships.

William G. Demmert, Jr., Ed.D., is professor of education in the Woodring College of Education, Western Washington University. He directs two programs that recruit and fund American Natives (American Indians and Alaska Natives) for teaching in the classroom and for school administration.

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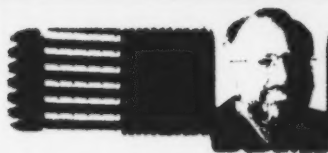
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The Best Websites For Finding ESL/EFL Jobs

With due deference to my colleague, Christine Meloni (who writes the excellent "Networthy" column for *ESL Magazine*), this month's column focuses on the Internet and its vast resources for the employment seeker.

There are many, many ESL/EFL job sites now available, but most reproduce what can be found in a very few places. For overseas job searches there are two main sites. Although both sites provide some listings for U.S. positions, the majority tend to mirror the profession: many more jobs outside the U.S. than in. The incomparable Dave Sperling runs the first, Dave's ESL Café. If you haven't checked out the Café yet, it offers much more than just job ads. There is enough there to keep the average teacher and student busy for a long while. It is located at www.eslcafe.com.

The other site is the TEFL Professional Network at www.tefl.com. In addition to the 262 open advertisements (as of 2/28/02), they also have a large résumé database for job-seekers. Their strength appears to be positions in Europe and Asia.

There are two major listserves that deposit ESL position announcements right into your e-mail box. The first is a sub-list of the TESL-L list, TESLJB-L. Information on how to subscribe is located at www.hunter.cuny.edu/~tesl-l/. You must subscribe to TESL-L first in order to be able to subscribe to TESLJB-L. In addition to position announcements, there is discussion about employment-related issues.

The second listserv, CATESOLJB, is a service of

CATESOL, the California/Nevada affiliate of TESOL. As opposed to TESLJB-L, it is for position announcements only and does not include a discussion aspect. It lists teaching positions within California and outside the state.

For positions inside the U.S., there are two main points of interest: *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (www.chronicle.com) and HigherEdJobs.com. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has long been the source of news and information for college and university faculty. In addition to ESL positions, they list a wide variety of teaching and administrative jobs. They've recently changed their format, apparently due to competition, and now update their jobs more frequently. The largest number of ESL advertisements is for community college positions.

HigherEdJobs.com, founded in 1996, offers a tremendous number of positions and has grown large quite quickly. Because their sole mission, in contrast to *The Chronicle*, is providing this service, HigherEdJobs.com appears to have outdistanced the competition. The number of positions, ESL and otherwise, has seemed to grow exponentially.

Have a favorite website not listed here? Send it to me and it just might get reviewed in a future column.

Thomas Nixon is the co-author of Bears' Guide to the Best Education Degrees by Distance Learning (Ten Speed Press). He can be reached at tnixon@cviip.net.

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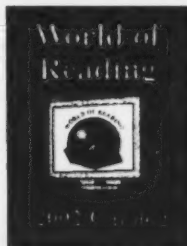
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part of ACCUPLACER, is a computer-adaptive battery of tests delivered online and designed to place college students of limited English proficiency in appropriate course. Available to two- and four-year institutions, LOEP is used for counseling and placement and in support of state testing.



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FEATURES

- Evaluating and Choosing ESL Software
by Joy Egbert and Gina Petrie 10
- Teaching Writing Using Peer Feedback Checklists
by Clare Furneaux.....16
- New Ways of Using Video Technology
in English Language Teaching
by Naomi Migliacci 22
- English Teaching in Mexico
by Denise Salazar.....26

DEPARTMENTS

- Editor's Note.....4
- Letters to the Editor.....5
- News Briefs 6
- Conference Calendar 7
- Reviews.....20
- Catalog Showcase.....30

COLUMNS

- Christine Meloni's Networthy 8
- Joy Egbert's Technology 14
- Richard Firsten, The Grammar Guy 18
- Thomas Nixon's Employment Focus.....28

Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?

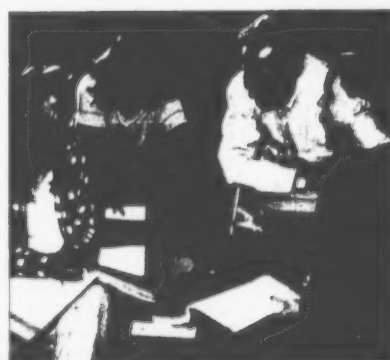


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Page 10



Page 16



Page 22



Page 26



Making Technology Work for You

Some teachers love technology and others don't, but we all probably have to deal with technology in some way in our work as ESL/EFL teachers. We hope that our fifth annual "Technology Issue" will help make technology work for you.

Joy Egbert, our regular technology columnist, and Gina Petrie kick off our technology issue with a thorough yet flexible process for evaluating and choosing software to use with ESL/EFL students. Their recommendations can transform a potentially overwhelming task into a very manageable one.

Many of us stay organized and get things done by making lists. Lists can help in teaching writing, too. Clare Furneaux describes different types of checklists that can be used in teaching writing, emphasizing those that go beyond issues of accuracy and that are especially effective in helping students give feedback to their peers.

Naomi Migliacci is an expert on using video technology in teaching ESL/EFL—an enthusiastic expert. But she is aware of the danger of putting the technological cart before the horse—technology has to support the goals of teaching and not vice versa. Her article provides practical advice on using video technology effectively to support instruction.

English has been an important language in Mexico for many years, and Denise Salazar describes how English is incorporated into the educational system. English is just one of many factors that combine to make this large, diverse Latin American nation a unique place.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director



The magazine for English as a Second Language professionals.

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Dr. James Alatis Interview

► The interview with Dr. James Alatis is a significant summary of some of the milestones in Jim's and, therefore, TESOL's history. No single person has done more for the professional development of our still emerging profession. I salute Marilyn and Jim for this fine collaborative effort.

—RUSSELL CAMPBELL
UCLA Language Resource Program
Los Angeles, CA

► Marilyn Rosenthal's interview with Dr. James Alatis (March/April 2002) gives the best overview I have seen of the tremendous contributions that Dr. Alatis has made in the fields of languages and linguistics (particularly ESL, bilingual, and heritage language education), and it was a joy to read. It is clear from this article that Dr. Alatis is a tireless enthusiast and advocate for the ideas and organizations he cares deeply about, which include the School of Languages and Linguistics at Georgetown University, TESOL, and TESOL's International Research Foundation. From my own experience, I can say that he embarks on new initiatives and projects with vision, purpose, wind-in-the-face excitement, and a powerful sense of history and detail. It is gratifying to know that after a life dedicated to the study and teaching of English, Dr. Alatis is now involved as well in efforts to preserve and develop the rich language and cultural heritage that many people in this country possess, beginning with his own language, modern Greek. This work, which involves (the little recognized but very important) schools that function outside the K-12 school system, churches, embassies, and national governments, is definitely worth following.

—JOY KRIEFT PEYTON
Center for Applied Linguistics

Using Authentic Materials

► Maria Spelleri's article, "From Lessons to Life: Authentic Materials Bridge the Gap," is very informative and insightful. It represents a seamless confluence of theory and practice. Maria and I studied in the same

master's TESOL program at Shenandoah University. Our professors, Dr. Ashley Hastings and Dr. Brenda Murphy, have designed a very inspiring curriculum. In addition to a solid foundation in linguistics, second language acquisition, and intercultural communication, we were truly imbued with the spirit for utilizing authentic materials. These ideas are based upon the works of second language acquisition researchers such as Stephen Krashen. The practical implications of these theories are an ESL classroom guided by content that is interesting, relevant and effective. There are so many fantastic pieces of advertising, entertainment, and journalism created by and for the native speaker that we should never lack for appropriate material. I rarely find myself looking to a textbook for activities or ideas these days. With a little time, creativity, and guidance from people like Maria, we can seize upon these artifacts of our culture to inspire, delight and educate our students. Language learning and language teaching, in addition to being effective and relevant, should be fun, and with the right authentic materials, it can be.

—SEAN SEBASTIAN GOMEZ
Northeastern ELC

P-12 Teacher Education Standards

► In 1980, I began to develop our ESOL/Bilingual M.A. program at UMBC. The guidelines I followed were TESOL's "Guidelines for the certification and preparation of teachers of English to speakers of other languages in the United States." This document was instrumental in helping me design the program, and I have referred to it many, many times over the years. Also, as a ESL/EFL teacher training program evaluator, I have referred to it often in developing evaluation plans and carrying out ESL/EFL teacher training program evaluations. It's only seven pages long, but it contains the basics needed to develop an ESOL teacher training program.

We now have the new guidelines, "TESOL P-12 ESL Teacher Standards."

which are 97 pages long. I guess they are a reflection of what has happened in our field in 30 years. I'm sure that all new and established teacher training programs will use the new standards in many different ways. I'm sure that ESOL teacher training programs throughout the U.S. and abroad will make the new standards required reading in teacher training programs. I'm not sure that we'll see any changes in the quality of ESOL teaching K-adult.

The first thing I tell my M.A. students in my methods and cross-cultural classes is "Don't believe a thing I say and don't believe a thing you read until you are in a 'real' teaching situation and put it to practice and try it out." I have the same attitude about 97 pages of the new standards.

The new standards will only be as good as we make them. It depends upon how we use and apply them. For those going through NCATE evaluations, we will kill many trees in showing how each of the rubrics are met in "our" programs. Our students will compile huge portfolios showing what they have "learned" and the "skills" they have attained. But the bottom line is what happens when our students are in the actual classroom situation. Will they become better teachers as a result of the work we have done in meeting the new requirements? Will I begin to see better teaching in the hundreds of ESL/EFL classrooms I observe each year. I doubt it.

I believe in standards. I use and apply standards all of the time, but 97 pages are too much. We live in a society where every idea has to be included—the bigger the committee, the more ideas we have to include. We live in a society where "bigger is better." So if this is the criterion by which we judge the new standards—we have a winner. But for now, I'll stick by what I tell my students. As for me, I'll be really busy for the next two years trying to make sense out of 97 pages of standards.

—RON SCHWARTZ
Co-Director, ESOL/Bilingual M.A. Program
University of Maryland Baltimore County

Compu-Teach Offers New Grant for Schools and Districts

Compu-Teach announces a second grant to schools and districts across the U.S. As before, the new grant offer is limited to the first ten districts that apply from each state. This grant includes on-site training and site licenses for their most recent K-12 CD-ROM releases for Windows and Macintosh. In exchange for feedback on how the software works with the curriculum the grant offers each participating school up to \$7,100 in software licenses and training for less than \$1000.

Compu-Teach completed their first grant offering on their original titles. Over 5000 schools participated. Two updates have been recently completed: See the USA and Joshua's Reading Machine.

The newest JRM CD-ROM Ver.3.0 received the coveted Media and Methods Award. Over 1000 teacher evaluations may be found at: <http://www.compu-teach.com/feedback>

Compu-Teach added twelve unique CD-ROM releases to their new offering covering Math, Reading, Problem Solving, Music, Violence Prevention, teen ethics and Spanish language.

David Urban, President of Compu-Teach said, "A limited number of schools will be given the opportunity to order our new CD-ROM titles with a 70% cost reduction grant."

Compu-Teach Grant Coordinators may be reached at **800-448-3224 ext. 234.**

ETS to Reorganize International CBT Operations

Educational Testing Service (ETS) will reorganize its international computer-based testing (CBT) operations to increase efficiency and improve access through multiple means of testing. Currently, ETS CBTs are offered to more than 1.5 million people worldwide through 400 centers in the United States and 195 international centers operated by Prometric. These CBTs include the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE). In the next year, ETS will phase out operations at 84 non-U.S. CBT test centers. ETS will establish paper-based testing centers at colleges, universities, schools and advising centers in the affected areas. Less than 15 percent of international test takers will be affected by the change. The international sites selected for closing had low testing volumes. A list of the centers being closed is posted at <http://www.ets.org/news/02040302.html>.

TIRF's First Call for Proposals

The TESOL International Research Foundation (TIRF) has issued its first call for proposals. TIRF invites proposals for doctoral dissertation grants and standard research grants in the field of applied linguistics/English language education. This call for research proposals addresses the first of several topics that TIRF considers to be research priorities. Visit www.tirfonline.org.

Compaq Corporation Active in Education

Through an agreement between Compaq Computer Corporation and the Ohio SchoolNet Commission, an agency of the State of Ohio, Compaq has become a key provider of hardware and services under the fifth round of the SchoolNet Plus program, which will total \$37 million during fiscal years 2002 and 2003. Part of a statewide initiative begun in 1995 to make technology an integral part of education, the SchoolNet Plus program already has provided resources for districts to install more than 180,000 multimedia computers in grades K-5. The contract calls for Compaq to provide computers to public school districts, nonpublic school districts and other K-12 educational entities in the state.

Compaq, Wildflower USA Publishing and author Harriett Fabrick are providing U.S. school children (grades K-12) and teachers with direct access to Fabrick's educational materials and the Furello e-book series. The Furello books are currently used throughout Texas to promote reading and vocabulary skills and to teach ESL. The series focuses on non-violent messages and includes characters from diverse cultures. The "e-tools" available include student workbooks, teacher manuals, interactive crossword puzzles, word searches, riddles, scrabbles, graphic organizers and more. For more about the Furello e-book series and other educational materials, go to Compaq's Bonus Points website www.compaq.com/kl2/bonuspoints.

English Language Acquisition Office/Clearinghouse News

OELA Gets New Director

Dr. Maria Hernandez Ferrier has been appointed director of the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students, OELA (formerly the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, OBEMLA). Dr. Ferrier directed OBEMLA for several months in 1992-93. Dr. Ferrier has received many awards including the Hispanic Heritage Month Education Award. Dr. Ferrier will advise the Secretary of Education on all matters affecting English acquisition, language enhancement and academic achievement for limited English proficient students under the "No Child Left Behind" Act.

Sample Lessons Plans Available Regarding LEP Student Data

The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition is offering sample lesson plans for grades 2-5 to accompany their poster entitled "The Growing Number of Limited English Proficient Students." The unit contains interactive activities that correspond with national and state curriculum standards and that convey information about multiculturalism and multilingualism in the United States. The lessons are sequential and ties themes of immigration, multiculturalism, and U.S. and world geography together with critical language arts and math standards. To download a copy, visit <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/new/whatsnew.htm>. For poster information, <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/states/stateposter.pdf>.

National Clearinghouse Adding Professional Online Development

The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition is currently developing a professional development distance-learning program. The Professional Online Development (POD) program is being designed to provide professional development to all educators regarding current teaching methodologies and other relevant issues pertinent to the education of English language learners. The Clearinghouse is seeking suggestions for training videos, learning materials, prepared modules or other materials that may be used to prepare educators to teach English language learners. Materials selected will be used to create "online modules" for teachers. For more information or submission of materials, contact Sam Klein, sklein@ncbe.gwu.edu.

Ordinate Creates Automated Spoken English Test for Children

Ordinate Corporation, a language assessment provider, has released the first completely automated spoken language test designed for children from 9 to 14 years old. The test, called Junior SET (Spoken English Test), assesses a child's English speaking and listening abilities in minutes. Junior SET is delivered over the phone and scored by computer. Ordinate has completed the development of the Junior SET with instructions and score reports localized in Korean, Japanese and English. Localization into Chinese is currently under development. The company will release the Junior SET in the Korean market first, with plans to introduce the test to Japan and China later this year. The PhonePass® technology behind Junior SET is the same technology used in Ordinate's SET-10 and SET-5 tests, which are ten- and five-minute spoken English tests for adults. <http://www.phonepasskorea.com>.

Conference Calendar

May

- 9-11 **Sunshine State TESOL**. West Palm Beach, FL. Contact Cheryl Benz, 305-237-3699.
- 16-18 **TESL Canada**. Regina, SK. scenes@sk.sympatico.ca
- 17-18 **Universidad de las Americas-Puebla**. Puebla, Mexico. Contact Ashley Withers awithers@udlap.mx.
- 17-19 **Venezuela TESOL**. Margarita, Venezuela. Contact Natalia McCarthy, natiamiccathy@cantv.net.
- 18-19 **The Japan Association of Language Teaching (JALT)**. Hiroshima, Japan. Contact <http://www.jaltcall.org/>.
- 12-14 **TESOL Academy 2002**. Denver, CO. Contact TESOL Education Programs, 703-836-0774.
- 30-June 2 **National Multicultural Institute (NMCI)**. Washington, DC. Contact Crystal Cala, 202-483-0700.

June

- 21-23 **TESOL Academy 2002**. Orlando, FL. Contact TESOL Education Programs, 703-836-0774.
- 27-29 **The International Dyslexia Association (IDA)**. Multilingual & Cross Cultural Perspectives on Dyslexia. Washington, DC. Contact IDA, 410-296-0232.

July

- 1-26 **Penn State Center for Language Acquisition. Summer Institute for Applied Linguistics**. State College, PA. Contact James Lantolf, conferenceinfo1@outreach.psu.edu.
- 5-8 **Community Languages and ESOL (CLESOL) and TESOL ANZ**. Wellington, New Zealand. Contact Elizabeth Morrison, e.n.morrison@massey.ac.nz.
- 12-14 **TESOL Academy 2002**. Denver, CO. Contact TESOL Education Programs, 703-836-0774.
- 15-18 **Brazil-TESOL**. Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Contact braztesol@nox.net.

August

- 18-20 **CALL Conference**. University of Antwerp, Universiteitsplein 1, Wilrijk, Belgium. <http://www.didascalie.be>.

September

- 19-21 **Southeast TESOL**. Regional conference, Atlanta, GA. Contact Frances Wilson, fwilson@yahoo.com.
- 19-21 **Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés (FAAPI)**. Córdoba, Argentina. Contact Elba Debat, faapi2002@hotmail.com.
- 20-22 **Panamá TESOL**. Panamá, Republic of Panamá. Contact Edith Espino, +507-263-8000 ext. 2106.
- 26-27 **First National Conference for Educators of Newcomer Students**. Washington DC. Contact Beverly Boyson, newcomer@cal.org.
- 28-29 **Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)**. Tokyo, Japan. Contact jane@ulis.ac.jp.

October

- 4-6 **IATEFL Hungary**. Veszpremi, Hungary. Contact Zoltan Poor, poorz@almos.vein.hu.
- 5-6 **Korea TESOL**. Seoul, Korea. Contact kotesol2002@yahoo.com.
- 5-6 **WATESOL**. Annandale, VA. Contact Karen Taylor, 301-405-5188.
- 11-13 **Current Trends in ELT**. Ankara, Turkey. Contact Beril Yucel, beril@baskent.edu.tr.
- 17-20 **MEXTESOL**. Monterrey, Mexico. Contact mextesol@mail.internet.com.mx.
- 18-19 **MITESOL**. Auburn Hills, MI. Contact Shari Weisbaum, 248-246-2568.
- 18-20 **Heritage Languages in America**. Tysons Corner, VA. Contact Scott McGinnis, 301-403-1750 x18.
- 31-1 **TESOL Euromed**. Edinburgh, Scotland. <http://www.himdall.scot.co.uk/tesoleuromed>.

English as a New Language Teaching Standards

The English as a New Language Standards are now available in PDF format for downloading from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) website at http://new.nbpts.org/standards/complete/ecya_enl.pdf. Standards that define accomplished teaching are central in the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The National Board is developing standards in 31 fields. As of March 2001, standards have been developed in 27 fields. All NBPTS standards are based on the National Board's Five Core Propositions for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. The standards serve as the basis for National Board Certification.

Online Business English Training for Teachers

American Business English Internet School (<http://www.bizenglish.com>) offers an online certification program for teaching business English. The Certificate in Teaching Business English (CTBE) program has been developed by ESL/ESP author and trainer Sue Mackarness and is offered online by BizEnglish of Boulder, Colorado. One-month sessions are scheduled for September and November 2002.

Parent's Guide to Testing and Accountability

The National Education Association (NEA) has developed a guide for parents about the testing of students. Many parents wonder how recent federally mandated annual testing will affect their child and what they should do to prepare. The guide helps parents answer basic questions such as "What questions should I ask my child's principal?" "How can I help my child do well on tests?" "What should I ask about test scores?" For more information, visit <http://www.nea.org/parents/testing/guide/>.

Heinle Acquires Language Teaching Publications

Heinle Publishing, a Boston-based specialized language publisher and provider of English language teaching (ELT) materials has purchased Language Teaching Publications (LTP) based in Hove, England. LTP is known for materials that feature the "lexical approach" and publishes a wide array of materials in ELT, including business English, with primary concentration of sales in Europe and the UK. Heinle is the specialized language part of the Thomson Corporation and publishes research in second language acquisition, original texts, software, and multimedia products for learners and educators in ESL/ELT, English, world languages and linguistics.



Aesop's Fables Online: Classic Reading Material for All Ages

John R. Long has created a website that many ESL/EFL teachers will find extremely useful. "Aesop's Fables: Online Collection" (<http://AesopFables.com>) features a wealth of reading material that will engage readers of all ages and at all levels of English language proficiency.

Site Overview

When you arrive at this site, you can begin by reading a history of Aesop's fables and a brief biography of their author. Then you can peruse the vast collection of fables.

The first four sections each contain approximately 100 of Aesop's fables. Sections five and six feature fables by Ambrose Bierce and Jean de La Fontaine. A special section entitled "Selected Fables" contains 86 fables that Long has chosen "for their ease of reading and concise moral understanding." More than 655 fables are available at Long's site.

In the remaining sections you will find additional stories: fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen, a short story and a medium length story by L. Frank Baum, and *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens.

Fables

The table of contents for each section is divided into two

columns. The left column lists the titles of the fables and the right column lists the morals of the fables, e.g., "The Bee and Jupiter"—"Evil wishes, like chickens, come home to roost" and "The Bundle of Sticks"—"Union gives strength."

The fables vary in length but most are short. For example, "The Fox and the Grapes" has 56 words, "The Boy and the Nettle" has 63, "The Cock and the Pearl" has 86, and "Androcles" has 261.

Seventeen of the fables can also be heard with Real Audio (which can be easily downloaded from the Internet). "The Farmer and the Snake," "The Milk-Woman and Her Pail," and more than 100 other fables have attractive illustrations as well.

There are 245 Fantastic Fables by Ambrose Bierce and approximately 25 by Jean de La Fontaine, whose fables are shown in English and French.

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She may be reached at cfmeloni@hotmail.com. Include "Networthy" in the subject line. This and past columns can be found at www.eslmag.com/articles.html.

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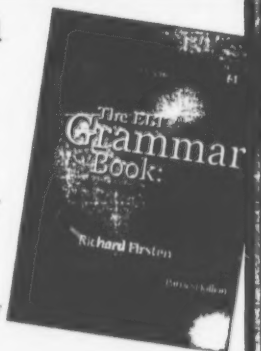
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Evaluating and Choosing ESL Software

BY JOY EGBERT AND GINA PETRIE

Many teachers are asked to evaluate and purchase software for their ESL programs. Often funds are limited and must be spent before a new term starts, making the timeline short. Many teachers, even avid computer users, do not have experience choosing software for ESL learners. Since there are many different kinds of software available and there are many different ideas among ESL professionals about what constitutes good software, the selection process can be daunting. Moreover, if a teacher searches the Web for help, there is an overwhelming number of websites that deal with software packages and software evaluation. Given these factors, evaluating and choosing software can be difficult, indeed. There are plenty of checklists and forms available to help in this process, but many of these fail to consider the specific context in which the software will be used.

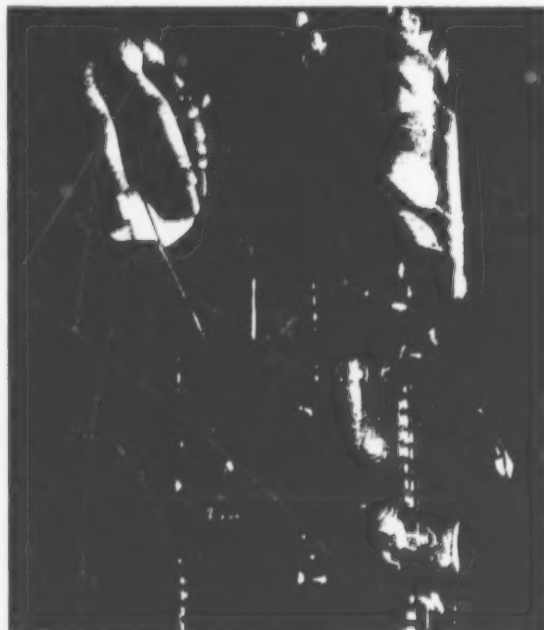
The Importance of Good Decision-Making

There are several reasons for going through a careful decision-making process. First, most programs want the most for their money. Second, a choice of software is usually a long-lasting choice. Most ESL/EFL programs cannot afford to upgrade and/or change their software regularly. That means that students will be using the software packages at least until more money becomes available. Finally, a decision about software may have an impact on how technology is used in a program in the future. Software that does not mesh with the goals of the program, teachers, and students will not be used, or if it is too difficult to use, it may sour people on using technology.

The Decision-Making Process

The process outlined here can help ensure that software is chosen carefully. This

procedure may seem more complicated than other methods advocated in the literature, but when it is used properly, it can ensure that the right software is selected. Each step in the procedure includes questions that should be considered carefully and answered by the administration and faculty as well as the students (particularly in the evaluation stage). The steps and questions that we recommend need not be construed as a linear process—steps and questions can be revisited as the need arises.



Step 1: Determining Goals and Needs

The first step in evaluating and choosing software is a needs analysis that takes into account the specific needs of the program, the faculty and the learners.

QUESTION #1: *What are the program goals?* Your answer might be something like this: "We want our program to be cutting edge, to be able to keep up with and compare favorably to other programs. We want our teachers to be happy and effective."

We want our learners to be successful (be able to pass the TOEFL, the SAT, the state high school certification test, the GED, to move up a level each semester, or some other objective)."

QUESTION #2: *In addition to supporting the program goals, what are the teacher goals?*

Among these, you might find that teachers want their learners to achieve better or faster and/or that they want to spend less time working and more time supporting this achievement (in other words, that they want to be more effective and/or more efficient).

QUESTION #3: *What are the learners' goals?* Your learners might want to get through quickly, learn well, be prepared for high school or college, read the *International Herald Tribune*, watch Disney movies or all of the above.

With answers to these first three questions, you can then answer the next three key questions:

QUESTION #4: *What goals do we have that are not being met or are not being met well?* The more specific you can be, the easier it will be to know whether the software you choose actually fits the needs. Discussions with teachers at faculty meetings are extremely helpful in determining this. Teachers love to talk about what they could use help with—encourage others involved to do this as well.

QUESTION #5: *Can technology help us meet these goals better?* Better in this case means more efficiently and/or effectively than with other materials and methods.

QUESTION #6: *In what way(s)?* The answer to this question may be that software can provide immediate feedback for learners in large classes or that teachers save time developing handouts by using software made for that purpose.

The more information you have, the

better your decisions can be. With the answers to these three questions, maybe you'll find that you need better or different materials, more planning time, or teacher mentors rather than new technology. If you find that a technology solution is a good one, you can look for software. Establishing a specific and concrete need can help target the kind of software to look for.

Step 2: Narrowing Down the Search

Before you take the considerable time that it takes to review specific pieces of software, you can ask another set of questions to help you narrow down the search.

QUESTION #7: *What types of software and what specific packages are available to help meet these goals?*

Make a list of software features that could help meet your need. Then, search the Internet for information about that specific type of software for your context. For example, typing "grammar software +secondary +ESL" or an even more specific set of parameters into an Internet search engine will reward you with information on software packages for your students in your area of need. Skim the overviews for clues to how these packages might meet your goals. There are software review websites that describe and evaluate software packages. These sites can give you more ideas about software that might suit your needs.

QUESTION #8: *What do teachers and students in similar contexts who have used this software say about it? What did they like and not like about it? What do other reviews say?* Once you choose some likely candidates, you want to check around before ordering them. You can ask local colleagues first. If you need more information, post a message to an electronic discussion list for technology and education. Carefully describe your specific situation, outline your goals, and mention the software that you are interested in. This will generate reviews and responses very quickly from colleagues who can give you practical information on how the software works in the classroom.

If the information you obtain this way is not complete or helpful, go to review sites specifically addressing that piece of software by typing the name of the software in a Web search engine.

QUESTION #9: *It sounds good, but could we afford it if we liked it? Also, do we have the hardware needed to run it?* If you answer "no" to either question, it is not worth spending time on now. Move on to something you can afford and that your hardware can support.

Step 3: Evaluation

Now you have a good description of the software, an idea of how it could meet your goals, and opinions from colleagues

about whether it will or not, so you can decide whether to take the time to evaluate it. Many people advocate looking closely at the interface design (what the screen looks like), the language used, the help available, and many other aspects as if there were a generic formula for good software. Instead of going through an extensive checklist for each possibility that you have found, we recommend that you use the software yourself or watch students and other teachers use it. You can get a feel for how it works, how easy it is to use, and what learning or teaching goals the software can support. Your evaluation can consist of questions such as this one:

QUESTION #10: *How closely does this fit with the needs outlined in Step 1? Can it fill more than one need?*

The Process in Context

The following two examples demonstrate how this process can work in different contexts.

Intensive English Program

If you are part of an intensive English program, your process might look something like this: Thinking about the task ahead of you, you review the program's curriculum guide to remind yourself of specific program goals. You talk with your students in class and your advisees and ask them what type of software they would like to see in the computer resource center. They say they want grammar practice—lots of grammar practice. A few students especially want software that will help them prepare for the structure questions on standardized tests they will take for college entrance. Although your university does not require standardized test scores for admission into the university from those English language students who successfully complete the IEP, some students desire to attend another university and want to spend some of their study time practicing for these tests.

Over the next week, you make a point of talking with faculty members about the type of software they would find helpful in their teaching. Teachers note that some of their students cannot seem to get enough grammar practice—the teachers often spend extra time creating and photocopying worksheets, checking the students' work, and then conferencing with students about these extra worksheets. Therefore, they would welcome other forums that offer students grammar practice. Several teachers are adamant, however, that they want software that offers something besides cloze passages or multiple-choice questions; they want something that they might be able to use during class time if relevant or that could extend what happens in class.

Types of Software ESL Teachers Might Find Useful

Elementary Level Skills Software

- ▶ Vocabulary building
- ▶ Discrete literacy skill building
- ▶ Reading comprehension
- ▶ Integrated skills (listening, phonics, reading, etc.)

Elementary General Software

- ▶ Writing programs that use graphics and sound
- ▶ Group-oriented problem-solving software
- ▶ Multimedia dictionaries

Secondary/Adult Skills Software

- ▶ Discrete grammar practice
- ▶ Vocabulary/idiom building
- ▶ Timed reading
- ▶ Reading comprehension
- ▶ Listening/speaking/pronunciation
- ▶ Notetaking
- ▶ Test preparation (e.g., TOEFL)

Secondary/Adult General Software

- ▶ Content programs on relevant topics utilizing multimedia
- ▶ Multimedia dictionaries
- ▶ Presentation packages
- ▶ Office software

Teacher Utilities

- ▶ Gradebook software
- ▶ Puzzle and worksheet makers
- ▶ Scheduling programs
- ▶ Office software

Important Websites for Software Information

- ▶ <http://www.eirc.org/review.html>
—has review guidelines and links to reviews.
- ▶ <http://www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk/cit/reviews/revlist.htm>—reviews.
- ▶ <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~call/software.html>—the TESOL CALL-IS website with advice and links.
- ▶ <http://astro.temple.edu/~jburston/CALICO/index.htm>—reviews from the CALICO Clearinghouse.
- ▶ <http://www.ruthvilmil.net/hut/LangHelp/softwarelist.html>
—reviews, forms, lists and links.

Next, you contact friends teaching at other IEPs to ask them for suggestions. One specific grammar title is mentioned several times. You go online and ask members of a technology and language learning discussion group for other suggestions for meeting the needs you have pinpointed and for information about the grammar program that has been recommended. You also check reviews for the software packages that these sources have mentioned. You find that many of them offer uncontextualized random structure practice, which does not meet the needs of your teachers or learners. With positive reviews from different sources for both the off-mentioned grammar program and a standardized test practice program, you find the websites, talk with company representatives, and order full copies for a 30-day preview.

You tell students about the software and then watch those interested take turns using the software. Over the next few days, you gather opinions from a number of students and faculty using the review copy. At the next faculty meeting, held in the lab, you summarize what you heard from the faculty and the students in terms of their needs and describe how the two software packages can meet these needs. After some discussion and a short review of each package using the projection system, the faculty decides to go ahead and make the purchases.

Elementary School Multilingual Classroom

If you are an elementary school teacher choosing software for both first and second language learners, your process might be slightly different, as demonstrated by this example.

You've won a mini-grant from your local language teachers' association to help you buy materials for your classroom. Although the funds do not limit you to purchasing technology, you were hoping to be able to buy software for your three classroom computers. In planning your purchases, you review your curriculum plan for the year, noting that your two

longest integrated thematic units will address the environment and "My Community." You decide to focus your materials search on these two themes.

There are many Spanish-speaking newcomers in your second grade classroom, some of whom have not yet become literate in English and others who, like some of the native English-speaking students, need language support for their work in the content areas (science, social studies, and so on). You make a list of what you perceive to be your students' most immediate resource needs, including repetition of concepts and language, individualized tasks, vocabulary support, dual language support, and effective feedback and scaffolds to grow in both language and content knowledge. You decide that effective materials would be flexible, content-based and focus on vocabulary building, both discretely and in context.

With your needs analysis completed, you ask faculty members at your school and colleagues in the district about resources they know of that can fill these needs. You are still not sure whether technology can do so any more effectively than other kinds of materials, so you gather a list of recommendations for many different kinds of resources. You discover that only a few of the resources on your list meet some of your criteria such as providing flexibility and effective feedback. Among the software packages that have been recommended are three vocabulary packages, a multimedia encyclopedia and content-based software packages that focus on mapping and describing communities.

You go online and look at reviews and case studies from teachers who have used these packages and join an electronic discussion involving teachers who have the same kinds of questions you have. You check the specifications of five of the packages that are highly recommended and discover that these programs will run on your computers, but two of them are too expensive to be covered by your grant. You order full copies of the three others for review and watch your students use

them for a week. One of the programs does not present effective feedback and does not offer scaffolds for students, but the other two fit the needs you outlined at the start of the process. You purchase these two software packages.

A Flexible, Effective Process

What we have described here is a thorough, thoughtful process that we have found to be successful when considering software purchases. The process varies each time it is used. Sometimes new needs are outlined during the review stage; sometimes learning about the capabilities of new software programs changes our ideas about what effective and efficient teaching and learning are. This process is certainly not the only path to making good choices about adopting technology for your language learners; we encourage you to adapt it to fit the needs of your own context.

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ESL Magazine's Online Poll

As an ESL/EFL instructor, do you use software designed for English language instruction with your students?

56% Yes

44% No

www.eslmag.com

Contacting Software Companies

You can obtain contact information for a publisher in at least two ways:

- By typing in the name of the software in a Web search engine.
- By using a website that lists thousands of publishers such as <http://www.microweb.com/pepsite/Software/publishers.html>

Most software companies offer a 30-day previewing option. To take advantage of this, there are several things you will need to do:

- Make your school affiliation clear when making the request. Some companies require a letter on school stationery.
- Perhaps provide payment information when making the request.
- Limit the number of items you request. (For some companies, it is one item; for others, it is as many as five.)
- Return the software within the 30-day period if you decide against ordering it or contact the software representative to request more time for evaluation.

Computer Books for Students and Teachers

by Hee Jung Jung

Computer Activity Books for Young Students

As the Internet becomes more popular and accessible, young students are eagerly exploring the entertaining uses of the computer. Teachers' concerns, however, center on what students can learn through computer use. There are various texts that can be used for content learning as well as computer learning, while at the same time providing fun activities for students. I recommend three books for ESL/EFL students that are filled with step-by-step, computer-based activities that meet all of these goals: *Kid Pix: Around the World*, *Click it! Computer Fun*, and *Computer Crafts for Kids*.

Kid Pix: Around the World (Addison-Wesley, 1993) has two parts. The first presents text and illustrations of other cultures and the second introduces cultural activities. This book gives guidelines for using Macintosh, DOS, and Windows versions of *Kid Pix*. Students can travel to places around the world to learn about daily life, customs, and special traditions of different peoples and explore and respond through related activities. One caveat is that most of the activities might be difficult for students who are at a beginning literacy level; the text presents long descriptions of each step in the activity instead of illustrations of each instructional step. This book is recommended for students who can read and have a little computer background. Otherwise, the guidance of parents and teachers is highly recommended to help students with these interesting and effective activities.

Click it! Computer Fun (The Millbrook Press, Inc., 1999) is composed of five sections: introduction, math, reading, geography and science. The introduction section explains basic computer components such as the monitor, keyboard and mouse. It then briefly explains how to write, paint, save, and print on the computer. The other four sections are composed of subject-related computer-based activities. Helpful hints, step-by-step instructions and the colorful text design will help make the information and activities very comprehensible to students even if they are new to the computer. However, all of the information is designed for use with PCs running Windows 95 or 98 and Microsoft Works. Teachers or parents may adapt the materials for use with Macintosh computers and with other word-processing programs, but this takes time and effort. Because the content of this book is not addressed to a specific grade or specific area within subjects, this book can be used at home or in after-school programs in addition to the classroom.

Computer Crafts for Kids (Ziff-Davis Press, 1994) is a collection of exciting craft projects that can be created with Word for Windows 6.0. This text, addressed to students ages eight and up, is divided into two parts: Getting Started and Now the Fun Begins. In the first part of this book, students can learn how to start Word, open files, save and print projects. The second part is composed of 14 attractive craft activities for young kids such as making bumper stickers, party placemats, wacky wall calendars and more. In this book, the author uses screenshots of the computer and text to explain each step of the activity. This visualization of each step will be helpful for student comprehension. Like *Click It!*, this book is designed for IBM-compatible computers running Windows and Word for Windows 6.0.

I highly recommend all of these books for young learners who are interested in computer activities. All three books are filled with fun-to-do, step-by-step, motivating activities that learners can use alone or in a variety of groupings and settings. These books will help language teachers make learning fun and productive.

CALL Books for Teachers

Recent developments in educational technologies have changed our language classrooms drastically and will continue to change them. In the digital age, language teachers have the responsibility of adapting themselves to the new tech-

nologies and developing new strategies for their language classrooms. There are many books available that can help; seven are briefly reviewed here.

Connected: Using Audio, Video, and Computer Materials in the Communicative Classroom (Master Communications Corp., 1999) is an interactive manual for ESL/EFL teachers. Its six chapters (Technology in the Communicative Classroom, Audio, Video, Computer Software, World Wide Web, and Electronic Mail) focus on how technology supports learning in a communicative classroom. The text provides useful examples of communicative activities, sample lesson plans, resources and references, and evaluation guidelines to help teachers review each technology in light of their own classroom needs.

Teaching ESL/EFL with the Internet: Catching the Wave (Merrill Prentice Hall, 2002) integrates the listening, speaking, reading, writing, cultural skills and assessment necessary to achieve communicative competence in the language classroom. This book looks like a collection of Internet-based lesson plans that can be used directly without any changes. However, this book does not provide any real context or adaptations, so the teacher's own judgment is required.

Recipes for Wired Teachers (JALT CALL SIG, 2000) has 78 computer-based activities for different levels and contexts. *Unlike Teaching ESL/EFL with the Internet: Catching the Wave*, *Recipes* presents many different ways to use and adapt each lesson and describes the minimum requirements, lesson objectives and intended student population for each activity. This information makes it easier for teachers to adjust each activity for their own classrooms.

New Ways of Using Computers in Language Teaching (TESOL, Inc., 1997) is also a collection of activities such as word processing and desktop publishing, using E-mail and MOOs, and working with the Web and multimedia. The focus of this book is pedagogy, not technology. It illustrates the potential of computer applications for language teaching and learning.

Email for English Teaching (TESOL, Inc., 1995) provides all kinds of e-mail activity ideas about how to use tools to access teaching resources and materials, enrich classroom activities with e-mail, promote highly motivating international exchanges and train students to find their own learning materials on the Internet. Along with *New Ways*, this text will be useful for teachers who want to design classroom activities step-by-step using email, MOOs, the Web or multimedia.

Weaving a Virtual Web: Practical Approaches to New Information Technologies and CALL Environments: Research, Practice, and Critical Issues provide teachers with the theoretical foundations of CALL as well as practical applications. *Weaving a Virtual Web: Practical Approaches to New Information Technologies* (National Council of Teachers of English, 2000) examines the theoretical, practical and pedagogical aspects of using hypermedia technologies in the classroom for the teacher who is interested in using this technology in the classroom. It provides the theoretical depth necessary to examine course goals and pedagogical objectives in CALL classrooms. It gives practical, hands-on suggestions for what works well.

CALL Environments: Research, Practice, and Critical Issues (TESOL, Inc., 1999) provides a broad view of CALL because it is a collaborative work by ESL/EFL teachers and CALL researchers. The articles very seriously promote optimal language learning conditions by examining CALL implementations in light of what theory and research has shown.

I highly recommend all seven books for ESL/EFL teachers interested in teaching with computers and other new technologies. These books explain the theoretical foundations of CALL and provide an amazing array of lesson plans and ideas for technology-enhanced instruction.



Technologies Under Development

Some of the technologies discussed in this column are new generations of those discussed in my last column, while others are conceptually different. Some are either in the development stage or in the process of being tested while others are in regular use outside of education. Each in its own way has the potential to contribute to language learning.

Long Distance Wireless: Wireless technologies generally work by being within a certain range of access points that are hard-wired into the Internet. Long distance wireless technologies will allow users to wander freely and access the same applications whether in a classroom or on a Nepalese trek. This expands the physical environment of the classroom to wherever students happen to be. There are current services that allow for long distance wireless (e.g., cell, satellite), but they are not yet inexpensive or reliable enough for schools to employ them.

Artificial Intelligence: Chess programs and expert systems used in entertainment and business are examples of a type of artificial intelligence. Some experts say that "true AI" is yet to be invented, but it is clear that computers are simulating humans more in each iteration and we can expect improvements constantly. For language learning, this means that in the relatively near future computers will be able to respond creatively to learner input, provide appropriate feedback and hold "conversations" with learners that are indistinguishable from those that learners have with actual humans. When this technology become ubiquitous and inexpensive and is part of software packages that students can use, it may turn out to be less dangerous than chat rooms and other Internet-based conversations, less stressful than meeting with native English speakers, may require less of a learning curve and less hardware, and may offer more convenience than current technologies.

Wearable Computers: The vision of on-call, wearable computers that we see in movies and television is not as far off as it sounds. This type of "headset" technology has the potential to make the classroom more mobile and more interactive and to extend opportunities for exposure and production of language. Examples of research and applications can be found on MIT's Wearable Computing page (<http://wearables.www.media.mit.edu/projects/wearables/lizzy/>).

Smart Cameras: Microsoft Corporation is currently working on the next generation of Internet-based cameras. These are multipoint (place to place to place), voice-activated cameras that zero in and auto focus on the face of the person who is talking. With all the useful features of current video conferences (supporting interaction, exposure and production, authentic audience, and other learning conditions), these cameras allow for more participants in a conversation and require less maneuvering of the technology to capture the speaker.

Self-translating Software: Another tool under development is self-translation software that automatically and correctly translates documents into the language that the user has chosen. When it finally trickles down to language classrooms and when used effectively, this tool will assist language learners in understanding the nuances of translation between the first and second language. Students will receive instant feedback and be able to check their language against a model.

Holographic (3D) Computing: Holographic displays—three-dimensional pictures—are currently being used for modeling and other applications in the sciences. Eventually, we can expect to see the three-dimensional display of any graphical image. For visual learners, this can facilitate intentional cognition. For teachers, it can assist in the use and storage of visuals and realia, and for content-based classes, it allows the exploration of abstract concepts in concrete ways.

Virtual Reality/Virtual Environments: Some virtual reality environments are entered by using special equipment such as goggles or visors while others are projected on walls that surround the user. Current interactive applications include the ability to take a walk around a college campus, travel through a computer and explore the inside of a molecule. For language learners, such environments might include a store, a restaurant, a public bus, the post office and other authentic environments. Learners can explore and interact in these simulated environments before actually leaving the classroom. Such environments can promote many important language learning conditions including social interaction, exposure to and production of language, intentional cognition and involvement in authentic tasks.

Haptic Computing: Haptic computing is being used over distances in the sciences. This kinesthetic technology uses special equipment (typically a glove) to allow off-site users to feel the surface of a germ or perform a simulated medical examination. This technology may eventually bring even more authenticity into language learning environments, particularly supporting intentional cognition in kinesthetic-oriented learners.

These applications may or may not continue in development, and it will admittedly be a long time before they are used in language classrooms (if ever). It is useful for language educators to envision the possibilities and to learn more about technologies in progress so that we can offer input into the process rather than adopting these technologies as an afterthought or when they finally trickle down to our classrooms and other learning environments. The final column in this series will discuss technologies that have been imagined but not yet been invented.

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Connected!

The book for ESL/EFL teachers using technology to enrich the communicative classroom.

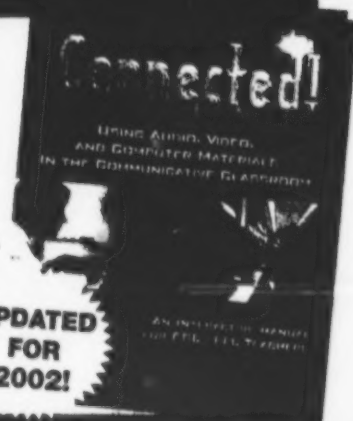
What makes this manual different from others you might have seen?

The focus is on how technology supports the learning that goes on in a communicative classroom. It does more than list sources for software, video, audio, multimedia or websites. It shows you how to use those resources in fostering a communicative environment.

Packed with examples of activities for: Major features:

- The Internet & World Wide Web
- Audio
- Video
- E-Mail
- Computer Software and Interactive Multimedia
- Examples of Communicative Activities
- Sample Lesson Plans
- Resources and References
- Evaluation Guidelines
- How to Use the Newer Delivery Systems

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Teaching Writing Using Peer Feedback Checklists

BY CLARE FURNEAUX

What do most people think of when checklists are discussed in conjunction with teaching writing? As I prepared to write on this topic, I wanted to know what preconceptions my audience might have, so I did a quick search of the Internet to see what's out there on "teaching writing using checklists." Up popped 19,700 results! It is interesting to note what words collocated with "checklist" in my search: various websites speak of "revision checklists," "technical checklists" and "editing checklists." Many of these checklists are flowcharts for finding errors, such as those provided in Ann Raimes' excellent book *Grammar Troublespots*, with questions such as "Do all the verbs belong to one time cluster?" (1992:37) followed by yes/no routes with further questions and advice. It seems that many people think of issues of accuracy when they consider using checklists in teaching writing.

Beyond Checklists for Accuracy

Checklists that focus on accuracy are great for getting students to check their language by themselves on penultimate drafts of writing. However, as a teacher I am more interested in checklists I can use in class to help earlier in the process. I want to use checklists to get students to think about content and genre issues: Does this text say what I want it to say? Does it read like people expect it to read?

Those are the big questions in writing, and all of our teaching is geared towards students being able to answer "Yes!" to both of them. Helping students get to that point requires the development of critical skills, and checklists can help with this. By answering a checklist of questions about drafts, students learn to ask the kinds of questions they should ask about any piece of writing. It also makes students, not the teacher only, responsible for feedback on content and organization.

I feel strongly about giving students this responsibility: within the English language classroom, the expert on linguistic matters is undeniably the teacher. But who is the expert on content? The students themselves are as good at judging that as the teacher. Organization is trickier: there are genre and cultural factors at play here

that the student may not be familiar with. However, when students are asked to use checklists that force them to consider content and organization and to ask genre-specific questions about a text, it raises their awareness of what is involved in writing and develops their writing skills.

On the grounds that it is easier to see the splinter in someone else's eye than the beam in your own, peer feedback is one of the best ways to develop these skills. Reading and giving feedback on other writers' work is an excellent way of becoming a critical reader of your own work.



Types of Checklists

What content-oriented checklists can we use for peer feedback? What kinds of questions should they contain? There are two basic types of checklists: the first is the generic type, which can be applied to any piece of writing or to any example of a particular genre (e.g., a checklist for lab reports). Teachers can produce these and use them for any text. The second type of checklist is the text-specific checklist that a teacher produces for a particular writing task in the light of what has been emphasized in class. For example, if introductions have been discussed, the checklist might include questions focusing on that part of the text. Text-specific checklists can also include questions about specific features that the teacher wants to highlight for some other reason, such as something that will be the focus in a subsequent class (e.g., use of adjectives to indicate attitude). Let's look at examples of both types of checklists.

Generic Checklists

In the sidebar at the bottom of the next page are two generic checklists first used in the National Writing Project in the 1980s in British primary schools. When a child finishes a draft of any piece of writing, he finds a partner and together they work their way through Card 1 on that draft and Card 2 on the subsequent draft.

Card 1 focuses on content feedback, including what is missing as well as what is there. The writer reads his work aloud to his partner, which alleviates any problems of handwriting or poor reading skills; it also prevents the peer from focusing on mechanical problems too soon. Card 2 is used for the next draft and focuses on mechanical accuracy, ideally when the content has been sorted out.

These cards play an important role in learner training: they guide the learners very explicitly to give and seek feedback on certain areas of their writing on specific drafts.

Text-Specific Checklists

The checklist below is one that I have used with upper intermediate level English for academic purposes students who are working on a reply to a newspaper letter arguing that students should not be sent abroad to study. In class we spent some time discussing this genre—the style and what should go into the introduction. We have also looked in detail at the original writer's arguments (and numbered them).

CHECKLIST FOR DRAFT 1

1. Is the writer's style a) personal? b) impersonal?
2. How many reasons does the writer give in favor of studying abroad?
3. Does the introduction: a) refer to the original letter? b) introduce the reasons given here?
4. Which of the original writer's main ideas does this writer argue against? (identified by numbers on the original text)
5. Is this letter convincing?
6. Any other comments?

Using Checklists for Peer Feedback

In order to use checklists for peer feedback, it's good for the questions to have simple answers. You have probably noticed that

the questions in the checklist above can be answered very simply—either with “yes,” “no” or a number or letter. This is so that the peer can focus on reading the text and does not have to write long answers. Such short answers mean that three peers can read each piece of work in the limited class time available (circulating their drafts in a group of four). They have to read the draft in turn and note down their answers on a sheet of paper, folding the paper over so that the next peer cannot see what they have written. This is similar to the game “Consequences,” which you may be familiar with: a story is built up in a group by circulating a piece of paper to which each person adds a sentence and which is folded over so the next person cannot see what has been written. In our feedback session, the paper is returned to the writer at the end. Before looking at it, the writer answers the questions with regard to her own text.

The writer then looks at the three readers’ feedback on her text. If their answers are the same, and they agree with her answers to the questions, fine. If not, there is a problem. It may be that one reader has not read carefully enough, so if two readers agree with the writer on a point, it is probably acceptable. However, if there is disagreement across the board or the three peers say “no” to question 3 (Does the introduction refer to the original letter? Does the introduction introduce the reasons given here?) or 5 (Is the letter convincing?), then major revisions are necessary on the next draft.

If there is disagreement on question 4 (Which of the original writer’s main ideas does this writer argue against?), there may be a problem in the writing of linking devices or signposting to indicate the introduction of a new point.

In addition, during the peer feedback activity, the writer reads three other students’ texts on the same topic, so she has more ideas of what else to say and how to say it, plus a feel for the level of the group.

An extra dimension can be added by circulating your own draft on the topic for

the checklist treatment. This can be very salutary: I have had some pretty damning (and fair!) criticism of my text (such as “no” to the first question on Card 1!—Do you think the writing is interesting/enjoyable?). This also gives the students exposure to a more expertly written (but not necessarily more effective) piece of writing and further examples of language and ideas they can draw on in their re-writes.

“What about plagiarism?” I hear you ask. A good point and one of which students must be aware, but at this stage of their learning, I feel that they can only benefit from seeing what other people at their level are producing. It is all part of the process of bringing writing into the classroom and talking about it.

The final peer activity here is to ask each group of four writers to nominate the best text in their group and to explain why it is the best. I write their nominations and justifications up on the board, so we end up with something like this:

MIGUEL: interesting; short and to the point; convincing

ALEYA: easy to read; good conclusion

ABDULLAH: convincing; good examples

JACQUES: good paragraphs—one clear point in each

ROKO: good introduction, clear, organized

This means the class ends on a positive note, with the students who have been nominated by their peers feeling pleased with their success. In addition, the criteria for successful writing in this task have been elicited from the group, not imposed by the teacher. All students then re-write their first drafts out of class in light of the peer feedback, the group and class discussions and the points for excellence noted on the board. The teacher then receives second drafts that are much better than the first drafts the students brought to class.

Teachers have asked what to do with students who do not bring a draft to class. That’s easy: they sit and write their first draft in class while the others are doing the

peer feedback activity. And their homework is the same: re-writing their first draft. I often find that they bring the writing task on the next occasion!

The issue of how many peers should provide feedback on a text is an important one. Pairs can be problematic: the two students might not get along or their levels might not be appropriate. If you are only getting feedback from one peer, you need to have great confidence in that peer’s ability to give you relevant feedback if you are to act on his advice. I prefer a larger number of peers—three or four seems to be the maximum number that can read a text and comment usefully on it in class time. It is much harder to reject three or four people’s advice, especially if they are all telling you the same thing! It also means that if one peer is weak or reticent about giving feedback, there are others who can do it while the “weak” peer builds up expertise and confidence.

I have found both generic and text-specific checklists very effective when used in the context of peer feedback. Checklists that go beyond issues of accuracy to the important issues of content and organization are very useful in training students to be more responsible for their own work. If you know of other good ways of using checklists in the teaching of writing, do get in touch.

Clare Furneaux teaches in the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at the University of Reading, England. She teaches campus-based and distance study modules on the teaching of writing and has taught ESL students in a variety of contexts. Her email is: c.l.furneaux@reading.ac.uk.

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Pair Work—Card 1

Choose a partner to work with.

Your task: Read your work aloud

Partner’s task: Listen carefully to your partner’s reading

Both of you: Try and answer the following questions:

1. Do you think the writing is interesting/enjoyable?
2. Is there anything missing in this piece?
3. Is there anything which is not clear or accurate?
4. Can you suggest any helpful words or expressions?
5. Can you suggest a more suitable beginning or ending to the piece?
6. Do you think it is too long or too short?
7. Can anything be missed out?
8. Has the writer written what (s)he was asked to do?

Write suggested improvements on a separate piece of paper.

Source: The National Writing Project (1989) *Responding to and assessing writing*, page 36.

Pair Work—Card 2

With your partner: read through your writing again.

Try and answer the following questions:

1. Are there any spelling mistakes?
Underline them in pencil.
2. Check the punctuation. Are the full stops and capital letters in the right places?
Correct them in pencil.
3. Show, on your writing, where you wish to make alterations.
4. Ask the teacher at this point if you feel you need more help.
5. Write out your revised version.

Richard Firsten
The Grammar Guy

Grammar Software Tips

Technology is revolutionizing language teaching and learning, and one exciting area is the development of grammar exercises for the computer. Some may still pooh-pooh focusing exclusively on grammar practice, but that trend seems to be changing.

There is a lot of software available these days with loads of grammar activities for your students, but there are some things to think about before you purchase them. First, make sure the software you choose uses the variety of English that you want your students to learn. Nowadays it's easy to order software produced in Hong Kong or the United Kingdom or the United States, so note which variety of English is on the software you choose.

Next, check out how many activities are context-based and what the context is. If the exercises contain nothing more than unrelated sentences, you might want to look elsewhere. The software should give students grammar practice in meaningful contexts.

Finally, consider how many of the exercises are mechanical. There should be a balance between mechanical exercises (which only allow for one correct answer and/or one correct grammatical element) and more meaningful exercises (which allow for a few appropriate answers and give the students some control over the language).

Grammar programs can be a marvelous tool for teaching and practicing grammar, but as with anything, there will be good ones and bad ones. *Caveat emptor!*

Now here's a great answer to our last "Food for Thought" question: Is it okay to say *I saw last night a good movie on TV about spies*? Adrienne Ochoa of Atlanta, Georgia, sent this response: "I'm taking a graduate grammar course in which we use Greenbaum & Quirk's *A Student's Grammar* (1990). The sentence is one that doesn't quite 'sound right,' however, several changes could be made.

"With respect to the adverb phrase *last night*, G & Q say that adverbs have relative freedom in where they appear in the sentence. They say that this placement could occur, especially because the object that follows is followed by a couple of modifiers. There are other possible adverb placements: *Last night, I saw a good movie...* (initial placement), or *I saw a good movie...last night* (end placement, which is the most common).

"Another problem occurs in the sequence of the prepositional phrases that modify the direct object. Maybe the change could be *...a good movie about spies on TV* because the phrase *about spies* directly modifies the phrase *a good movie*, and the phrase *on TV* splits the phrases apart. How'd I do?"

Just great, Adrienne! There are two problems. The first is that the verb and direct object are separated, something we shouldn't do. The second problem is the mis-

placed modifier. The best sentence is *I saw a good movie about spies on TV last night*. This follows a simple word-order rule that many of us learned as kids: WHO - WHAT - WHERE - WHEN - (WHY/HOW can be added to the end of this chant). By the way, WHAT = verb + direct object. Since WHAT consists of these two elements, they can't be separated. These four W's really show what the word order should be in our sentence. Teach it to your students to help them learn the basic word order of English before they start using variations such as placing WHERE or WHEN in the initial position for emphasis.

Here's more "Food for Thought": (1) What are the rules for placing *enough* before or after what it modifies? (2) What's the difference in use between *enough* and *enough of*?

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer, and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida.

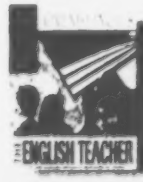
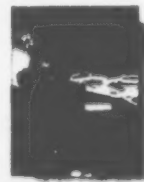
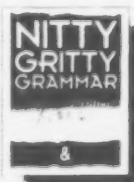
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The ELLIS Academic Suite
ELLIS, Inc. (formerly CALI, Inc.), 1994

Ellis Island, located in upper New York Bay, was once the leading U.S. immigration center. From this starting point, foreigners poured into our country and began their struggle to learn the English language and adapt to our culture. Now, ELLIS software (English Language Learning and Instruction System) is an excellent starting point for immigrants and other students to learn and improve their English.

Recently installed at the New London Adult Education Center in New London, Connecticut, the ELLIS Academic Suite gives students a variety of learning tools and allows them to move forward at their own pace. Initially the students take a placement test and are scored on grammar, reading, vocabulary and listening proficiency. They then work at their own levels, which may be anywhere from Intro through Senior Mastery. At every level, the program provides numerous well-designed quizzes, tests and games that go beyond the video dialogues.

The Intro level covers eight themes with three to eight lessons for each theme. These themes cover basic language skills for beginners. For example, in Theme Two, students learn about shopping for food and clothing. The lessons cover prices, simple math and other relevant content.

ELLIS Middle Mastery reinforces and builds on the skills taught in the Intro level. However, the focus in this segment is on grammar and conversation. The Grammar Tutor in Middle Mastery combines grammar instruction with themes using video clips, graphics and practice activities. The Practice Menu includes listening comprehension, phrases, culture, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Students can practice all of these skills in the context of

the lesson being studied. The summary activity is a maze that provides practice and review for vocabulary, phrases and grammar.

Topics at the Senior Mastery Level include making small talk, going on a job interview, discussing literature and creating a budget. The content, word choice and pace of the conversations are natural. The dialogues, which are rich in advanced vocabulary, idioms and complex sentences, address social and cultural issues such as how to respond appropriately to others in various situations. Whether advanced level students are studying English for professional, academic or personal reasons, Senior Mastery will strengthen their abilities in grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening comprehension and pronunciation.

If students have trouble while using the program, there is help. By clicking on the turtle icon, a line is repeated slowly. Students are also able to record and listen to their own voices. If they are having difficulty with vocabulary or instructions, it is possible to listen to the definition and directions in their own language.

Instructor Utilities, included in the program, is a system to track student progress and consists of a database for compiling class lists, viewing students' progress and printing reports.

These are just a few highlights of the ELLIS Academic Suite. In addition, there is a separate component called Master Pronunciation plus an ELLIS Business segment. Our students enjoy the program and have fun while learning. Although it doesn't take the place of a teacher, ELLIS can augment instruction and help the students develop the skills they will need to move forward in our land of opportunity.

Kathy Collomore and Suzanne Lane are ESL teachers at the New London Adult Education Center in New London, Connecticut.



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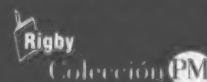
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New Ways of Using Video Technologies in English Language Teaching

BY NAOMI MIGLIACCI

Years ago when I began to use video in the ESL/EFL classroom, only analog video was available. VCRs were expensive, and I had to cast my lot with Beta or VHS. I thought I was pretty smart when I bought a VHS machine and Beta went the way of the horse and buggy. Video in the classroom also included material copied from television if you could program your VCR. A few years into my teaching career, I remember seeing a demonstration on laser disc and thinking it was very cool, but I was bothered by the fact that it was so big and so expensive. Later, I saw a prototype of the CD, and I remember the young man telling me it was going to be all the rage in the future. I just couldn't imagine what I would do with all my 8-tracks and cassettes. That was then.

This is now. At the recent TESOL 2002 convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, I realized that "video" is probably a misnomer for what it means to language teachers today. Now we talk about making digital videos with the latest cameras and publishing them to the Web. We chat about the advantages of streaming video over other formats. We discuss the best kind of digital cameras to buy. We pontificate about what else we can do with digital still cameras if our new digital video cameras have that capacity. We wonder if it's worth digitizing the old analog videos if we don't buy the DVDs. We want to know when we will be able to make our own DVDs. We try to decide the best way

to share our materials around the world given the myriad formats of DVD. Those of us involved in these discussions don't feel trapped by the "video" label because we realize we have gone beyond computer-assisted language learning, doing all that and more. We call it "new ways of using video technologies in English language teaching."



One thing is not new, however. Good language teaching is good language teaching, with or without technology. Regardless of video format (analog, digital, student made, pre-packaged, on the Web, etc.) teachers still need to evaluate their video technology in terms of language goals. Whether a teacher is just starting out with technology or whether she is known around the school as a techno-gadget queen, the

evaluation process is the same. There are four phases of evaluating and implementing video technology.

Content and Instructional Presentation

In the first phase, teachers evaluate the video technology for its content and instructional presentation, which means how it fits with the outlined goals and objectives of the lesson or the course. Goals should always be tied to student achievement. They should be measurable. For example, "to infuse video into my lessons" is not a good goal. While you may be able to reflect an increase over the previous year of the percentage of videos you showed, the goal is not tied to students achieving mastery of the content or language. The goal should be linked to a year-end assessment or other standards-based means of determining if students have reached an established level of performance (Schmoker, 1999).

To establish the goal, write it in simple, direct language that can be understood by almost any audience. An example of a good goal would be "to improve students' persuasive oral presentations." This goal is accurate, complete, and non-trivial (Schreck & Schreck, 1991). First ask, "How can I accomplish this goal?" Then ask, "Can I use technology to realize this goal?"

Planning for Instruction

The second phase of evaluating and implementing video technology is planning for instruction. List the skills the students will need to

accomplish the goal. Using the persuasive oral presentation example, you would list the skills the students would need to accomplish this task. Be precise. For example, if you want good oral presentations, you might want the students to have good eye contact, appropriate gestures and a strong persuasive introduction with facts to support it.

Since a good instructional strategy is to show students a model of what they are expected to do, you might start by showing a model of persuasive presentations on video or DVD. Students would then need to analyze what makes a good presentation and what doesn't. Several "prepared" examples exist that can be adapted for this purpose. *No Brainers: On Public Speaking, The Associate, Gung Ho, and Other People's Money* all contain clips of persuasive speeches.

Part of the evaluation of the video technology at this point is to evaluate how easy it is to use and how appropriate the linguistic features are (Schreck & Schreck, 1991). Also, what are the aesthetic qualities of the material? *No Brainers*, which is an instructional video, could be shown in its entirety, but it would not be appropriate to sit and watch *Other People's Money* for two hours for the 10 minute clip of the persuasive speeches at the annual stockholder's meeting. The American auto worker in *Gung Ho* seems to bomb his persuasive speech to the Japanese company, while the office assistant in *The Associate* gets a job because of her convincing tactics. Each of these movies presents excellent examples of persuasive language in American business, which, with a little creativity, can be extracted for use in the ESL/EFL classroom.

Designing Tasks for Students

In phase three, the instructor needs to design tasks for the students to practice the skills taught. As you design tasks, include the instructional strategies for teaching the skill. In the persuasive oral presentation example, you might teach the students the skills of 1) organizing around a topic sentence using a *mini-lesson in lecture format*, and 2) including supporting details using *direct, whole class instruction* as

your instructional strategy. Imagine your thematic unit is "animals." You teach the students to make a controversial topic sentence such as "Dogs make better pets than cats." The class might brainstorm three supporting details: 1) Dogs come when you call them, 2) Dogs will go swimming with you, and 3) Dogs are more companionable than cats. Using *peer-mediated learning* as your instructional strategy, you ask the students to practice their speeches. They make introductory and concluding remarks.

While accomplishing the task of practicing speeches in pairs or small groups, the students will need to monitor their oral grammar and pronunciation as well as the organization of the speech and their overall presentation skills. You may have given mini-lessons on these topics in advance, and the class has analyzed the speeches in the prepared videos. The students are now ready to videotape each other and analyze their speeches like they did the prepared videos. To make the task more authentic, you can use a serious subject such as "why our English language program is so excellent" and record with a digital video camera so that students can download their persuasive speeches to a computer, edit them and publish them to your school's website.

Assessment

In phase four, the instructor needs to assess whether or not the goal was met. Did the students accomplish the task during the guided practice activity? Can they now do it on their own? How do you know? How do the students know if they have mastered the skills? The teacher should provide a rubric or scoring guide, which the students can make based on the prepared video models they analyzed. Students should be able to fill in the scoring guide during guided practice. These should be aligned to the skills and standards expected by your program, school, district or state. For the persuasive oral presentation, you might want to make sure students include a strong, controversial topic sentence with three convincing details and supporting evidence. You might want students to pause after each thought, make eye

Video Technology Checklist

Use the following checklists while evaluating the video technology you would like to use in the classroom.

Using Video Technology

- ✓ Is the technology easy to use?
- ✓ Is it aesthetically pleasing?
- ✓ Does it fit with the content being taught?
- ✓ Will it motivate the students to want to learn more?
- ✓ Does it fit with the purpose/objectives of the lesson?
- ✓ Is it cost effective?—Can it be used again?
- ✓ What will the learning curve be?
- ✓ How long will it take?
- ✓ What is Plan B?
- ✓ Can this material be taught a better way?

Student-Teacher Dynamics

- ✓ Does the technology provide excitement?
- ✓ Does it fit with student learning styles?
- ✓ Does it fill in gaps of teacher teaching style?
- ✓ Are there appropriate tasks developed?
- ✓ Will it help preview a lesson (schema)?
- ✓ Will it help before a test/quiz?
- ✓ Will it help those students who have difficulties?

contact with everyone in the room, have good posture, and use correct grammar and pronunciation.

The other part of assessment includes evaluating your use of the technology. Were the prepared video examples appropriate models? Ask the students what they learned about persuasive oral presentations from these examples. Solicit feedback on the videotaping experience. Did the students find the videotaped feedback helpful? If you published to the Web, was there any feedback? For example, were there inquiries about your English language program based on the students' published Web clips?

In the oral presentation example, it is possible to use all the latest in "video" gadgetry. The movie examples can be shown on DVD, and students can use the Special Features to analyze the persuasive language and idiomatic expressions of the characters in many languages including their first language if it's available. Students can use the latest digital video cameras to make their own speeches and put them on the Web. They use all the language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) to accomplish this task. They do the things that we know help students learn a language: negotiating meaning with their peers, viewing models, practicing the target language, using the first language, participating in hands-on activities, incorporating all learning styles and modalities, and having clear expectations through a rubric or scoring guide.

Using New Technologies

Whether a teacher uses analog video or goes digital doesn't matter as much as the plan to "infuse video technology into the curriculum." However, I do think the latest in video technology is not only a lot of fun to use, but the quality is better. There are several factors to keep in mind as you consider using new video technologies.

The first is teacher flexibility. This means that it's acceptable for students to know more about the technology than the teacher does. Teaching and learning become a two-way street with real negotiation of language. There is a learning curve, but students and teachers can

work on it together.

The second factor to consider in using video technology is the reliability of the equipment. If the equipment is constantly breaking down, freezing or running erratically, it is difficult to maintain momentum. For example, if you're using a remote control with a DVD player, you'll need batteries—someone has to take care of this. It's also essential to have a Plan B (or a fantastic technical support team) for those times when the technology doesn't cooperate.

Another factor to consider is the ease of use of a technology. In this realm, DVD has many advantages over videotape. It is easier to use because you can jump from one scene to another. Also, the DVD pause feature produces a clear still picture (unlike the picture produced when you pause an analog video). Since the quality of the image is superior, analysis of the picture is easier.

Another factor in favor of new video technologies is the amount of content available for use in language learning. For example, in addition to the "feature presentation," a DVD may also describe how a movie was made or what the actors and director were thinking when they made the movie. For example, in the Special Features section on the DVD of *The Bear*, the director talks about a disaster in filming the scene with the mountain lion and the little bear. The cameras fell into the rushing river and everyone was yelling as the scene was being shot. It's an amazing scene compared to the one in the actual movie. In *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, the actors discuss how they brought their different Chinese dialects to the table and how they made the movie palatable for western audiences. In *The Patriot*, the animation crew shows the viewer how the battle scenes were computer-generated, yet each soldier was created with a period costume. In some ways, these features and discussions are more meaty than the actual video.

If you are considering video production, the latest video camera technology is easier to use and is more appealing. Digital formats are much easier to edit than analog. Student-produced movies can easily be downloaded onto new computers

(with loads of memory) via FireWire—hardware that enables high-speed data transfer. The latest software makes edits clean and the finished product much more attractive, which is especially important given the time and effort it takes to make a film. While the equipment may seem expensive, schools and programs looking to purchase equipment can make it a student project in which students search the Internet and comparison shop. Students can make persuasive speeches and write persuasive letters on which equipment is the best.

Finally, I have noted in my research on infusing technology into the curriculum that it is indeed motivating not only for students, but for teachers as well. When technology fits with the goals of the lesson, both students and teachers are satisfied. Many teachers ask students to make videos, but why? Teachers like to show videos in the classroom, but are they effective? How does the technology help students acquire the language or content? Intuitively, teachers know that something good can happen when they use video technology, like the negotiation that goes on in peer groups or hearing and seeing real language. However, the tasks that use new video technologies need to be systematically aligned with language objectives. When students are confident that the tasks and technology used in class will help them learn the language skills they need, then they will be motivated to participate and invest themselves in learning. This is a great lesson.

Naomi Migliacci is the past chair of the Video Interest Section of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL, Inc.). She currently works for the Education Alliance at Brown University and continues to conduct research in the area of computer-assisted language learning with a focus on video technologies.

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ENGLISH TEACHING IN MEXICO

BY DENISE SALAZAR

Which North American country is ranked as the eleventh most populated country in the world with a total population of 101, 879,171 as of July 2001?

Which internationally oriented country in Latin America has Spanish as its official language and has had English as an officially taught foreign language in secondary schools for the past 30 years?

Which country in Latin America has 51 ethnic groups and 62 dialects being spoken throughout the nation?

Which country is considered by major industries and businesses to be the linchpin for doing business in the rest of Latin America?

Which country has important cultural, social and economic ties with the United States as part of the fabric of its own culture?

The answer, of course, is Mexico.

The Role of English

The English language has influenced Mexico since 1835 when the first North American families with their own language and traditions, settled in Texas, which was then part of Mexico. This event brought English into the country, and people living in the northern regions of Mexico started speaking the language. Nowadays, this influence has grown much stronger in many ways: economically, socially, culturally and professionally.

Mexico's largest border is with the United States. It is 3,152 km long and it allows Americans and Mexicans to share and exchange economic, social and cultural backgrounds. This fact helps to account for the great influence the United States and American English have in Mexico, especially in the north-

ern cities such as Monterrey, Tijuana, and Juarez. These Mexican cities are the most industrial and economically advanced cities in the nation. What happens in Mexico's north influences the rest of the country.

Another reason for the popularity of English is the great influence that American television programs, movies and musical groups have in Mexico. It is quite common for young people to know the names of such musical groups as 'N Sync or to go to first run American movies.

The influence of English on the Spanish language is also growing, especially in the northern states where the

Spanglish words such as "*caminacion*" ("walking") from the verb, "*caminar*" or "*amolation*" ("how bad.") This is not too different from when people in the United States joke about their ability to speak Spanish and say things like "El soup-o" or "El plate-o."

Another aspect of the popularity of American English in Mexico is the actual use of borrowed English words that have become part of everyday informal conversational Spanish or popular slang—e.g., "Está Cool." (That's cool. That's great)

These examples illustrate the fact that the teaching of English in Mexico is important and prestigious. There is a

saying in Spanish that is popular in Mexico: "The person who speaks one language is worth one person. The person who speaks two languages is worth two people." English language teaching is more pervasive than ever, and it is developing and spreading rapidly. It is thought to be the way to success, socially, in business and professionally.

This feeling is reflected in the teaching of English from elementary school on up.

Various Teaching Situations

Education in Mexico is nationally unified and regulated by the Ministry of Education.

Schools are categorized into pre-school (three levels), elementary school (six levels), and secondary school/junior high school (three levels.) Education is obligatory in grades 1-9 according to Mexican law.

The Ministry of Education organizes and develops the curriculum to be followed in all schools and approves the textbooks chosen for the public schools. English is taught as the required foreign



contact between Spanish and English speakers is the greatest. People joke about "Spanglish" in Mexico. This Spanish/English mix is actually a type of interlanguage—often used among teenagers or young adults in Mexico. For example, when people are joking about how well they speak English, they will add the English noun suffix *-ation* to many Spanish words in a conversation. So, for example, this would yield such

language in the public schools usually beginning in seventh grade. Because Mexico is so close to the United States, however, the level of English introduced in junior high school is more on a false beginner level than on a zero level. Some public schools have recently begun to implement English programs starting in the fourth grade.

The private schools must also follow the national curriculum for English teaching, but they go well beyond it. English is usually introduced at the kindergarten level through play and games. In most private elementary schools, students attend classes from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and have five hours of English per week. There are some private elementary schools that offer a bilingual curriculum where students have 15 hours of English per week and can actually use English as a medium of instruction. In these schools, the teaching of English is closer to an ESL teaching situation or a native English speaking situation.

There are great differences between schools in the private and the public sector. Most of these differences are socioeconomic and cultural in both the student and teacher population. Public schools are more often found in the poorer suburbs or in small towns. Most of the teachers are not native English speakers and do not have extensive EFL teaching preparation.

The private schools, on the other hand, have more affluent students, and often the teachers speak English well or are native speakers, especially in the bilingual private schools. The primary private schools often follow the American educational system in their programs. The schools have beautiful facilities, and there is usually more money available for books, computers, language labs, etc.

English is also taught on the high school level. Here there are both public and private high schools with distinctions similar to those in the elementary and junior high schools regarding the public versus the private sector schools. The main objectives for the high school English courses are reading, writing and improving research skills for dealing with articles and news written in English. There is increased emphasis on vocabulary and grammar, as well.

Language institutes are private institutions that offer language courses at all levels for adults and young adults who want to increase their level of proficiency because they are going abroad for

study or work. Many of the programs are individual, tailor-made programs at these language institutes and often there are intensive immersion programs. Many of these language institutes promote and support international student exchange programs.

One of the main characteristics of the language institutes is that most of the teachers are native speakers of English. There are both British and American language institutes. Some of the more well known schools are the Anglo Mexicano de Cultura, the Anglo Americano, Consejo Británico, Berlitz, Harmon Hall and Quick Learning.

British English has been very pervasive in textbooks and language teaching for the past 30 to 40 years in Mexico. But for the last ten years, American English has become more popular because of Mexico's relationship with the United States, and in many cases American English is the standard variation that is taught.

Both the U.S. Department of State and the British Council run programs that teach English and train teachers in Mexico.

University level courses are regulated by the National and Autonomous University of Mexico. These courses generally emphasize reading, writing and academic English. In order to enter any private or public university, students have to take an English placement test which is based on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Students are then placed in beginning, intermediate or advanced level courses. Students take English during their first year of college and can continue by attending the language center at the university. This is more prevalent in private universities where there is much more emphasis on learning and improving English skills for professional or business reasons.

Teacher Training

Any person who wants to become a teacher in Mexico can be trained in government subsidized teacher training programs in various state teacher training colleges or in universities which have a school for teacher training. But this is not the case for most English teachers. They can usually get a degree in the field of EFL simply by attending a teacher's diploma course. This course can last from two months (an intensive course) to two years and focuses on techniques for teaching English as well as improving teachers' English proficiency. With this

diploma, teachers are able to apply for an English language teaching position at any school for levels K-9.

As the demand for English teaching increases, so do the types of teacher training courses. Some universities are now offering a full B.A. degree in English language teaching where the English language and English as a foreign language teaching techniques are intensively studied.

In addition, there are also certificate courses for teaching EFL offered by Cambridge University and other universities as well. But the Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English (COTE) and Diploma for Overseas Teachers of English (DOTE/DTFL) are the most well known and the most prestigious. They are supported by the British Council in cooperation with Cambridge University.

There are also many opportunities for professional advancement in the field of EFL provided by MEXTESOL, a TESOL affiliate and the national organization for EFL teachers in Mexico. There are also various regional chapters of MEXTESOL. The MEXTESOL organization conducts regular professional development seminars and holds an important convention once a year where teachers come to hear the best researchers, authors and teacher trainers in the field.

Conclusion

The English teaching situation in Mexico reflects great diversity and growth. The need for English continues in most major aspects of life in Mexico: career improvement, social status, professional development, better opportunities, etc. The proximity of Mexico to the United States and the use of American English on the Internet and in the scientific community are continuing factors in this development. And whether a student is learning English in a public school, a private school, a language institute, or a university, one thing is certain in Mexico: The person who knows two languages will always be valued as two people.

Denise Salazar is the local editor for EFL at Pearson Educación in Mexico and is currently working on a major EFL series for the junior high school level. She has taught English at various levels in Mexico and has trained teachers throughout the country. She has also been an academic consultant and presenter for Pearson Educación throughout Latin America.

Heading into Administration

Most of us love what we do as ESL/EFL teachers, so the idea of leaving teaching to become an administrator may be a foreign concept. For some teachers, the word "administrator" even has negative connotations. Yet, there are experienced teachers who make the decision to go into administration.

As I conducted an informal survey of how administrators become administrators, two motivations surfaced: Most of the people I talked to mentioned their desire to affect positive change, both for teachers and for programs. Some administrators also mentioned financial rewards.

Erin Walsh, an administrator at a university-based IEP, responded to my informal survey. "While teaching is still my passion, administrative work is financially more rewarding." However, she went on to say, "I found that, as an administrator, I was able to make positive changes in the school at many levels." Walsh's career path led her from being a short-term summer teacher with that program into full-time teaching, then into a combination of teaching and directing. She finally became the full-time director and, with two colleagues, purchased the school. She is now vice president of Global Language Institute.

The logistics behind obtaining an administrative position vary, but at the college level you can start simply by taking your "turn" when the department chair position becomes available. This is how Suzanne Kocins became ESL department chair at West Valley College. "It was my turn," she responded. Although department chairs at her college are only given some release time from

teaching, this has given her the opportunity to experience both sides of the system.

Most of the administrators I talked to had significant teaching experience. From a reading of university IEP position announcements, it appears that colleges typically want you to have from three to five years of teaching experience and some teacher training experience before being considered for a directorship.

In public schools and adult schools, the typical route is to earn an administrative credential. This is a minimum requirement for many positions outside the classroom, even if you do not supervise other personnel. Earning the credential in no way guarantees an administrative position, but it is one of a number of hoops that you have to jump through to even interview for those positions. Most states require a person to have three years of teaching experience before becoming an administrator.

Despite higher salaries and the power to effect change, not everyone I talked to was happy with his or her position in administration. One public elementary school vice-principal (who prefers to remain nameless) regrets making the move. "The difference in salary is significant, but I spend far too much of my day working with discipline. When I was in the ESL classroom, I had more of an opportunity to be creative and to work with many different kinds of students."

Thomas Nixon is the co-author of Bears' Guide to the Best Education Degrees by Distance Learning (Ten Speed Press). He can be reached at tnixon@cvip.net.

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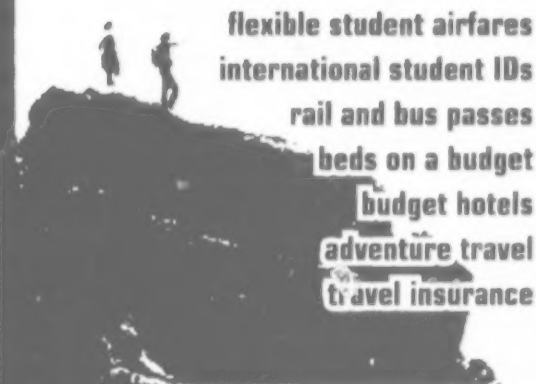
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FEATURES

Kagan Structures for English Language Learners
by Dr. Spencer Kagan and Julie High 10

NCELA Spells RESOURCE!
by Patricia Anne DiCerbo 16

Teaching Vocabulary for Peace Education
by Francisco Gomes de Matos 22

English Teaching in Argentina
by Blanca Arazi 26

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Note.....4

Letters to the Editor.....5

News Briefs 6

Conference Calendar 7

Reviews.....20

Catalog Showcase.....30

COLUMNS

Christine Meloni's Networthy 8

Joy Egbert's Technology 14

Richard Firsten, The Grammar Guy 19

Thomas Nixon's Employment Focus.....29

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Page 10



Page 16



Page 22



Page 26



Making Cooperative Learning Count

It's a beautiful sight for a teacher: students cooperating and working busily together in small groups, talking and learning. It's especially important in language classes where students need as much input and output time as possible. In our cover story, Dr. Spencer Kagan and Julie High describe how Kagan Structures can help ESL/EFL teachers make the most of cooperative learning in their classrooms.

We are happy to feature Pat DiCerbo's article about the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA), formerly known as the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. We hope that our story will assist you in taking advantage of this rich resource for ESL/EFL teachers.

When we have a classroom full of students, we have the opportunity to teach them much more than language (and we do teach more than that, even if we don't realize we're doing so!). Francisco Gomes de Matos challenges us to teach students the language of peace and describes ten creative ways that we can teach vocabulary for peace education.

Blanca Arazi gives us a glimpse into the interesting and challenging realm of English language teaching in Argentina, where English, especially British English, has a long history.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal

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Evaluating and Choosing ESL Software

► Thanks for Joy Egbert's and Gina Petrie's article on "Evaluating and Choosing ESL Software." It's very helpful to have a well thought-out, step-by-step process for making software choices. There's so much material available out there with lots of "bells and whistles" that it can be hard to stay focused on the needs and goals of one's program, teachers and students. My coworkers and I are going to study this and plan carefully so that we will be prepared when we go to upcoming conferences in which software vendors have

exhibits. We'll be ready, and we'll know just what we're looking for. I also appreciate the extra information about contacting software publishers, getting information about software, the types of software available and computer books for teachers and students. Keep publishing these types of practical articles—they really help!

—S. MONTAGUE
 High Point, NC

► Thank you for the article "Evaluating and Choosing ESL Software" by Joy Egbert and Gina Petrie. While the article is practical, understandable, and offers many valuable and useful suggestions, it doesn't say anything about buying individual software packages vs buying site licenses and it also doesn't say anything about checking software availability for specific/multiple platforms (PC vs. Mac vs both, for example). While these points may seem obvious, the tone of the entire article is general, so information of this type should still be included.

—D. OLIVER

Estrella Community College, Avondale, AZ

New Ways of Using Video Technology

► Thank you for the article by Naomi Migliacci, "New Ways of Using Video

Technology in English Language Teaching." My students and I enjoy using video in class, so it's good for me to re-evaluate what we're doing so that we're using video effectively and efficiently and not wasting time. It's also good to hear about new ways to use video that we haven't considered. I'm hoping that as time goes on, DVD technology will become cheaper and more accessible. Money is always an issue for our ESL program, as I'm sure it is for others.

—M. JONES
 Oak Park, IL

Teaching Writing Using Peer Feedback Checklists

► I can't wait to use the peer feedback checklists for writing described by Clare Furneaux in her article. I've been wanting to make some changes in my writing classes and was planning to do so this fall. My students need to become more independent in evaluating their work. That's our job as teachers, to prepare students for life after ESL classes when they will be on their own and we won't be there to take them through the writing process. Thank you for this article. I'm planning to tell others about your excellent publication.

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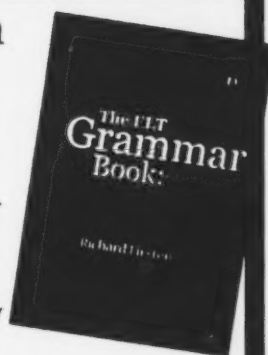
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New National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Students

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) has established the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth. The 13-member panel began meeting in May and will identify, assess and synthesize literacy research related to the education of language minority children and youth. Members of the panel and their support contractor, SRI International and the Center for Applied Linguistics (SRI/CAL), will produce a report that evaluates and synthesizes the research literature and provides research-based recommendations to guide educational practice and inform educational policy.

First National Conference for Educators of Newcomer Students

The first National Conference for Educators of Newcomer Students will be held September 26-27, 2002 in Washington, DC. Sponsored by the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA, formerly OBEM-LA), the National Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE), the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) and the Center for Applied Linguistics, the conference will showcase successful newcomer programs, facilitate the sharing of materials and curricula, and provide information about program design options. Participants will learn how various program models address newcomer issues and will network with others who serve newcomer students across the United States. <http://www.cal.org/front/events/newcomer.html>.

New Bilingual Website to Help Hispanic Parents Get Their Kids into College

Many Hispanic parents want their children to go to college, but they may not know enough about what's required to get them there—so says a survey conducted recently by the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute in California. Ninety-six percent of the Hispanic parents surveyed expected their children to go to college, but 66 percent of the parents failed to answer half of eight basic questions related to getting their kids into college. According to the study, many Hispanic children are likely to miss crucial steps leading to college unless they and their parents learn more about the process.

The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans has created a new bilingual website to provide parents with information about getting kids into college. The website launch includes a national public awareness campaign with the Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation on their 55 Hispanic-focused radio stations to make these tools available

Condition of the Education in the United States 2002

The National Center for Education Statistics has released *The Condition of Education 2002*. This annual report summarizes important developments and trends in education using the latest available data. The report, which is required by law, is an indicator report intended for a general audience of readers who are interested in education. The indicators represent a consensus of professional judgment on the most significant national measures of the condition and progress of education for which accurate data are available. The 2002 print edition includes 44 indicators in six main areas: 1) enrollment trends and student characteristics at all levels of the education system from preprimary education to adult learning; 2) student achievement and the longer term, enduring effects of education; 3) student effort and rates of progress through the educational system among different population groups; 4) the quality of elementary and secondary education in terms of courses taken, teacher characteristics, and other factors; 5) the context of post-secondary education; and 6) societal support for learning, including parental and community support for learning, and public and private financial support of education at all levels. This edition also includes special analysis on the environment, climate and student outcomes at private schools and on the enrollment and persistence of nontraditional undergraduates. The report is available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/>. For ordering information, visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/help/orderinfo.asp>.



to parents, educators and community leaders.

www.YoSiPuedo.gov and www.YesICan.gov provide information on the Myths and Facts about College Costs, 20 Questions to Ask Your Guidance Counselor, and Things You Need to Know About Paying for College. The initiative worked with collegeboard.com and Tormont Publishing to provide content. In addition, the new mascot, Pablo the Eagle, will host www.YesICanKids.gov and encourage reading and educational advancement among the Hispanic community's youngsters.

U.S. Education Secretary Rod Paige will make a direct appeal to every public school principal, every college and university president including Hispanic-serving institutions, as well as community technology centers asking them to make these tools available to their constituents.

Visit <http://www.YoSiPuedo.gov> or <http://www.YesICan.gov>.



Increasing Graduation Rates for English Language Learners

Advocates for Children of New York and the New York Immigration Coalition recently published the report *Creating A Formula for Success: Why English Language Learner Students are Dropping Out of School, and How to Increase Graduation Rates*. Since the implementation of New York State's new graduation requirements, more English language learners (ELL) are dropping out than are graduating from high school. This report analyzes the educational outcomes of ELLs since the implementation of the new standards, evaluates the implementation of promised improvements in the education provided to ELLs to help them meet the new standards, and makes recommendations to increase graduation rates for ELLs. <http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/pubs/formulaforchange.html>.

Conference Calendar

July

- **5-8 Community Languages and ESOL (CLESOL) and TESOL ANZ**. Wellington, New Zealand. Contact Elizabeth Morrison, e.n.morrison@massey.ac.nz.

- **15-18 Brazil-TESOL**. Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Contact braztesol@nox.net.

August

- **18-20 CALL Conference**. University of Antwerp, Universiteitsplein 1, Wilrijk, Belgium. <http://www.didascalie.be>.

September

- **19-21 Southeast TESOL**. Regional conference, Atlanta, GA. Contact Frances Wilson, fwidcon@yahoo.com.

- **19-21 Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés (FAAPI)**. Córdoba, Argentina. Contact Elba Debat, faapi2002@hotmail.com.

- **20-22 Panamá TESOL**. Panamá, Republic of Panamá. Contact Edith Espino, +507 263-8000 ext. 2106.

- **26-27 First National Conference for Educators of Newcomer Students**. Washington, DC. Contact Beverly Boyson, newcomer@cal.org.

- **28-29 Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)**. Tokyo, Japan. Contact jane@uils.ac.jp.

October

- **4-6 IATEFL Hungary**. Veszpremi, Hungary. Contact Zoltan Poor, poorz@aimos.vrn.hu.

- **5-6 Korea TESOL**. Seoul, Korea. Contact kotesol2002@yahoo.com.

- **5-6 WATESOL**. Annandale, VA. Contact Karen Taylor, 301-405-5188.

- **11-13 Current Trends in ELT**. Ankara, Turkey. Contact Beril Yucel, beril@baskent.edu.tr.

- **17-20 MEXTESOL**. Monterrey, Mexico. Contact mextesol@mail.internet.com.mx.

- **18-19 MITESOL**. Auburn Hills, MI. Contact Shari Weisbaum.

248-246 2568.

- **18-20 Heritage Languages in America**. Tysons Corner, VA. Contact Scott McGinnis, 301-403-1750 x18.

- **31-1 TESOL Euromed**. Edinburgh, Scotland. <http://www.heimdall.scot.co.uk/tesoleuromed>.

November

- **2-3 TESOL Macedonia-Thrace**. Thessaloniki, Greece. Contact tesolmth@compulink.gr.

- **7-9 Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers and the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers**. Prince Edward Island, Canada. Contact cast@istar.ca.

- **8-9 Ohio TESOL and Lau Resource Center**. Columbus, OH. Contact www.citl.ohio.edu/~otesol/conference/conference_f2002.htm.

- **8-9 Colorado TESOL**. Longmont, CO. Contact Larry Fisher, 303-735-4234.

- **8 Louisiana TESOL**. Baton Rouge, LA. Contact Brian and Susan Ary, 504-865-5803 or 504-280-7345.

- **8 Oregon TESOL**. Salem, OR. Contact rkurzet@pcc.edu.

- **16 Indiana TESOL**. Indianapolis, IN. Contact Ahmar Mahboob, 812-855-8012.

- **16 NNETESOL**. Manchester, NH. Contact Rosemary Orlando, 603-668-2211.

- **21-23 TESOL Ontario**. Toronto, ON. Contact TESOL Ontario, www.tesolontario.org/.

- **22-23 Puerto Rico TESOL**. San Juan, PR. Contact Naomi Vega Treves, nvega@sagrado.edu.

- **22-23 TESOL Italy**. Rome, Italy. Contact Paolo Coppari, tesol@uis.it.

December

- **27-30 Modern Language Association**. New York, NY. Contact MLA, 646-576-5263.

New Resources from NCLE

The National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) is offering several new resources on the Web including "Issues in Accountability and Assessment for Adult ESL Instruction," a question and answer document by Carol Van Duzer, and NCLE fact sheets on topics in adult ESL such as assessment, family literacy, professional development and uses of technology in adult ESL.

Improved Software for Distance Language and Voice Education

WinPitch LTL Software is a speech and prosodic patterns visualizer and synthesizer that enables language and voice students and teachers to develop oral and pronunciation skills in a distance-learning setting. Winpitch, USA now offers an improved version of the program that better allows students to hear examples of proper speech patterns, record their own voices, see their actual voice patterns compared to that of the teacher or a native speaker, and send and receive recordings with detailed comments and critiques from the teacher via email.

New Video on Effective Instruction for Native American Students

The National Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) has released a 41-minute video "Studies in Native American Education: Improving Education for Zuni Children." The video is a resource for educators working with Native American students and presents effective strategies for improving classroom instruction. The video features master teachers using CREDE's Standards for Effective Pedagogy that address the effective education of culturally and linguistically diverse students. An excerpt can be viewed at <http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/products/multimedia/multimedia.html> and purchased at <http://www.cal.org/store/crede/>.

Reading Series Available in Spanish for the Dual-Language Classroom

Curriculum Associates, a publisher of educational materials in print, video and multimedia, has released Spanish versions of three reading series: the CARS® Series (Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies), STARS® Series (Strategies to Achieve Reading Success), and TEST READY® Reading Longer Passages. The three research-based reading programs in English are used in classrooms nationwide and with the Spanish versions can now be used in dual-language classrooms. www.curriculumassociates.com



Geography Sites for Children

Geography is a popular subject in ESL/EFL classes, especially with K-12 students. The Web abounds with sites that offer teachers many useful materials and helpful ideas to familiarize children with global geography while developing their English language skills. The four sites described below represent a few among the many sites of interest that are not specifically designed for non-native English speakers but could be used in the ESL/EFL classroom.

Geography Ideas

www.teachingideas.co.uk/geography/contents.htm

This site provides teachers with short summaries as well as detailed explanations of several geography activities. Two that I find particularly attractive are "Travelling Teddies" and "Learning with Postcards," both for children ages 5 to 11. The Teddies activity asks the teacher to "send your teddy around the world and let your children learn some valuable geography about real people and places." The summary of the Postcards activity reads: "Use postcards to teach your class about different places around the world. Includes seven activities which you can try and ideas for building up your own collection of postcards."

Educational Resources for Cartography, Geography, and Related Disciplines

<http://mapping.usgs.gov/www/html/1educate.html>

The United States Geological Survey offers a wealth of educational resources. Maps are a very important part of this site. An

area called "Working with Maps" contains "Map Adventures" for grades K-3, "What Do Maps Show" for grades 4-8, and "Exploring Maps" for grades 7-12. Other sections of interest are "TerraWeb: Remote Sensing for Kids (Grades K-12)" and "The National Atlas of the United States."

Helping Your Child Learn Geography

www.geographic.org/geography/learning.html

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education has created this site. It consists of many sections including "Location: Position on the Earth's Surface," "Place: Physical and Human Characteristics," "Relationships within Places: Humans and Environments," and "Regions: How They Form and Change."

Geo-Globe Interactive Geography

<http://library.thinkquest.org/10157/geoglobe.html>

This interactive site was created by three students from Canada, Poland and the United States as an entry to a ThinkQuest Competition. (See <http://thinkquest.org/index.html> for the ThinkQuest Home Page and <http://www.tesol.org/pubs/magz/wanweb.html> for a review of ThinkQuest in "Wandering the Web" in *TESOL Matters*.)

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She may be reached at cmeloni@hotmail.com. Include "Networthy" in the subject line.

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CONTENTS

THE PARAGRAPH

History
Definition, Purpose and Function
Length and Development
Topic Sentence
Unity
Coherence
Planning and Organizing

THIRTY WAYS TO WRITE PARAGRAPHS

Chronological Sequence
Narrative
Dialogue
Anecdotal
Descriptive
Spatial
Example
Analogy
Definition
General to Particular
Particular to General
Simple to Complex
Division
Classification

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

Comparison and Contrast
Process Analysis
Physical Analysis
Climactic
Anticlimactic

Opinion and Reason
Question and Answer
Problem and Solution
Cause and Effect
Enumerative

Introductory
Transitional
Concluding
Summary

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS

Combining Paragraph Structures
Organizing Multiple Paragraphs
INDEX

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107

Kagan Structures for English Language Learners

BY DR. SPENCER KAGAN AND JULIE HIGH

Kagan Structures are radically transforming classrooms across the United States and in many parts of the world. These easy-to-learn, easy-to-use instructional strategies are ideal for promoting second language learning. In classrooms in which the Kagan Structures are used regularly, students for whom English is a second language learn both English and academic content far more quickly and far more thoroughly than when traditional instructional strategies are used. The Kagan Structures also promote language and content learning far more than does group work.

Let's do a thought experiment. Imagine three classrooms—Classrooms A, B and C. In all three classrooms there are a number of ESL students at different stages of language development. In each classroom the students are at exactly the same ability level in both language and content mastery. In all respects the classrooms are identical with one important exception—they differ in their approach to instruction.

Classroom A: Traditional.

The teacher in Classroom A relies primarily on Whole-Class Question-Answer. That is, to promote content and language learning the teacher asks questions of the whole class, students raise their hands to be called on, and when called on by the teacher, they respond. We peek into Classroom A during a vocabulary lesson. The teacher asks, "Who can tell me some of the items we find in the produce section of the market?"

Classroom B: Group Work. The teacher in Classroom B relies primarily on Group Work. That is, to promote content and language learning the teacher has students sitting in groups of four and often calls for student interaction in groups. We peek into Classroom B during the same vocabulary lesson. The teacher gives groups a directive, "In your groups talk it over. What are some of the items we find in the produce section of the market?"

Classroom C: Kagan Structures.

The teacher in Classroom C knows and uses a range of Kagan Structures. That is, to promote content and language learning Teacher C, like Teacher B, has students sitting in groups of four and often calls for interaction in groups. There is a critical difference, though. The interaction of students in Classroom C is highly structured. Teacher C uses Kagan Structures. We peek into Classroom C during the same vocabulary lesson. The teacher gives groups a



directive: "In your groups, turn to your shoulder partner and do a RallyRobin. Take turns naming some of the items we find in the produce section of the market."

On the surface of it Classrooms B and C appear radically different from Classroom A, but not that different from each other. In fact, all three classrooms are radically different—especially with regard to the language and content learning that results for ESL students. Let's analyze why.

Why Classroom A Fails, Classroom

A is exquisitely designed to have ESL students fall through the cracks. Juan is in Classroom A. He knows the names of some produce items but does not dare raise his hand. He knows there are other students who are more fluent than he is, and he does not want to risk the embarrassment of speaking out before the whole class. In his culture, it is not the norm to compete, to put oneself in front of others. He is also a bit shy. Given this, he finds it much easier to simply not raise his hand. Because he is not participating, after a time his mind drifts to other things. Soon he is not learning any new content or language.

Why Classroom B Fails. In Classroom B Juan is in a group of four students. In his group there are two students who are more fluent than he is, so again he sits back and lets them take over. Sometimes during group discussions he does not say a word, and again, his mind drifts because he is not participating.

Why Classroom C Succeeds. When Juan is placed in Classroom C, he becomes engaged. His partner names an item and then it is his turn. Juan is hesitant, but his partner patiently waits. When he names an item his partner smiles. Each time it is his turn he gets encouragement and support from his partner and is able to name a number of items. Further, because he is engaged, he listens to the items his partner is naming and is learning both content and language.

The Design of Kagan Structures

All of the Kagan Structures are very carefully designed. They are carefully structured to implement four basic principles of cooperative learning, PIES (Kagan 1994):

- P = Positive Interdependence
- I = Individual Accountability
- E = Equal Participation
- S = Simultaneous Interaction

Positive Interdependence. To determine if we have satisfied the principle of positive interdependence we ask, *Is a gain*

for one associated with a gain for others, and is help necessary? Positive Interdependence places students on the same side so a gain for one is associated with a gain for another and students cannot succeed alone. In our example, in Classroom A, students were not on the same side. They were competing for the teacher's attention. When one was called on, the others lowered their hands in disappointment. A gain for one was a loss for the others. Further, no help was necessary. Students could succeed entirely on their own, so they felt no need to cooperate or support each other. In Classroom B, students felt themselves to be on the same side, but their interaction was not structured, so one or two students could complete the task without help from the others. In Classroom C, students had to cooperate. The structure not only placed them on the same side, working together, but it made it so one person could not do it all. To do a RallyRobin you need to cooperate with your partner.

Individual Accountability. The principle of individual accountability is satisfied if we can answer yes to the question, *Is individual public performance required?* To satisfy the principle of individual accountability, students must perform on their own in front of at least one other. Classrooms A and B fail the test of individual accountability as students can choose not to participate. Classroom C passes the test because during a RallyRobin individual public performance is required. No one can opt out.

Equal or Equitable Participation. The critical question to ask here is *How equal is the participation?* In Classroom A we end up calling most on those students who least need the practice and calling least on those who most need the practice. In Classroom B the same problem of unequal participation is recreated in the groups: The more fluent and outgoing students take over. When Kagan Structures are used, the interaction is very carefully designed so there is far more equal participation.

Simultaneous Interaction. The critical question to ask regarding simultaneous interaction is *What percent of the students are overtly active at any one moment?*

When we call on one student in Classroom A, with thirty students in the class, we have only one of thirty students producing language—a little over 3% of the class! When we have students in groups of four, partici-



pation goes up dramatically. With one student at a time talking in their groups, at any one moment 25% of the class is producing language. Notice, though, using RallyRobin doubles the overt active participation: 50% of the class is producing lan-



guage at any one moment. Because pair work doubles the active participation compared to group work, many Kagan Structures include pair work.

Structures Produce Gains. Given this analysis, it is no mystery why students

post dramatic language and content gains when Kagan Structures are used. To take one example, the Catalina Ventura School in Phoenix, Arizona, adopted Kagan Structures in 1996. Three years later they showed marked improvements in 23 of 26 areas when looking at percentages of students that mastered a skill. Some grade levels showed as much as 25% growth in students demonstrating mastery. Mastery of district skills in math at the sixth grade level increased 22%, progressing from 63% to 85%. Fourth grade reading scores jumped from 53% to 85%, a 32% increase. Finally, Catalina eighth graders jumped 33% in writing, climbing from 49% to 82%. These gains were all the more remarkable because of the high percentage of ESL students and the increasing number of students from low income homes. Students receiving free or reduced lunch rose from 55% to 74% at the same time the dramatic test score gains were being posted (Moenich 2000). When Kagan Structures are used, all students are engaged and all students learn both content and the language of instruction.

Lots of Kagan Structures to Choose From

There are over 150 Kagan Structures with different functions. Some are designed to produce mastery of high consensus content, others to produce thinking skills, and yet others foster communication skills. A few favorite Kagan Structures are described in the sidebar below.

The primary source for Kagan Structures is *Cooperative Learning* (Kagan 1994). Here you will find a description of well over 100 Kagan Structures, when to use them, how to adapt them for use with English language learners. A second primary source for Kagan Structures is *Multiple Intelligences: The Complete MI Book* (Kagan and Kagan 1998). In the multiple intelligences book, there are simple structures to engage each of the eight intelligences. For example, with Kinesthetic Symbols, students learn to use their hands to symbolize the content, engaging the bodily/kinesthetic intelligence. Those structures best suited for second language learning are described in

Favorite Kagan Structures

TIMED PAIR SHARE: One student talks for specified time and the other listens. Then they switch roles.

TEAM INTERVIEW: Each student on a team in turn is interviewed by his/her teammates.

NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER: After the teacher asks a question, students write their own answer, discuss it in their groups, signal they are ready, and the teacher calls a number. Students with that number respond using a range of simulta-

neous response modes.

BOSS/SECRETARY: One student ("Boss") dictates to another ("Secretary") who records the answer. The boss receives praise and then students switch roles.

MIX-N-MATCH: Students circulate in the room with cards, quizzing each other and then finding their match. For example, the person who has the picture of a shoe searches for the one who has the word "shoe."

Second Language Learning through Cooperative Learning (High 1993), which also contains ready-to-use ESL activities to go along with the structures.

Structures not Lessons

The use of Kagan Structures is very much in contrast to other approaches to cooperative learning. The most important difference is that other approaches are lesson-based. That is, they ask teachers to plan cooperative learning lessons. With the Kagan approach, rather than planning cooperative learning lessons, we make cooperative learning part of any lesson by including structures. The structures can be inserted at any point in any lesson to create greater engagement and learning for all students.

Advantages of Kagan Structures for English Language Learners

Besides implementing the PIES principles, structures have a number of advantages:

1. **Greater Comprehensible Input.** Students adjust their speech to the level of their partner because they are working together.
2. **Natural Context.** Language is used in real-life, functional interaction, reducing problems of transference.
3. **Negotiation of Meaning.** Students have the opportunity to adjust their language output to make sure they understand each other.
4. **Lowered Affective Filter.** Whereas it is frightening to speak out in front of the whole class, it is easy for students to talk with a supportive teammate.
5. **Peer Support.** Students encourage and support each other in language use.
6. **Enhanced Motivation.** Because the structures are engaging interaction sequences and students need to understand each other, there is high motivation to speak and listen for understanding.
7. **Greater Language Use.** Using a pair structure such as Timed Pair Share, it takes but two minutes to give every student in the class a full minute of language output opportunity. In contrast, in Classroom A, using whole-class question-answer, to provide the same amount of oral language output per student it would take over an hour because the teacher is asking a question and responding to each student one at a time.

These and many other advantages of the Kagan structures are documented and detailed at length in three publications: Kagan 1995; Kagan, Kagan and Kagan 2000a; Kagan and McGroarty 1993.

Adapting Kagan Structures for Levels of Language Development

The Natural Order Hypothesis (Krashen and Terrell 1983) postulates that as students learn a second language, they pass through five stages or levels called "the five levels of language acquisition":

1. Pre-Production
2. Early Production
3. Speech Emergence
4. Intermediate Fluency

5. Fluency

In a typical classroom, there are students at several stages of language acquisition. Even a group of students who arrive in the country and begin school on the same day will have acquired vastly different capabilities in the target language within a few weeks.

Kagan Structures possess a unique capacity: they can be adapted to accommodate full inclusion of language learners at all acquisition stages at once. The same structure can involve limited as well as fluent speakers so that language practice and content mastery are combined. There is a wide range of structures that can be used at each of the levels of language production and many structures accommodate many levels simultaneously. Many structures have been modified for different levels of language proficiency; specific modifications of many structures for different levels of language acquisition are spelled out in four publications with associated videos (Kagan, Kagan, and Kagan 2000a, b, c, d).

Pre-Production. For students at the Pre-Productive language acquisition level there are structures that allow kinesthetic responses so students can engage in and demonstrate the full range of thinking skills: knowledge, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis and evaluation. In classrooms where students exhibit a range of language acquisition stages, use of structures like Line-Ups, Formations, Mix-Freeze Group, Similarity Groups and Corners offer all students the chance to participate equally. Similarly, kinesthetic response modes can be easily integrated into structures such as RoundTable, RallyTable and others so students can demonstrate concepts through manipulatives or drawing.

Early Production. Students at the Early Production stage benefit from choral response modes and gambit development that are associated with many Kagan Structures. Praising, asking critical questions, and responding to input from teammates or partners are integrated with the steps of many structures such as Timed-Pair-Share, Fan-N-Pick and Find-Someone-Who. Using the musical intelligence to increase retention, Poems for Two Voices, Songs for Two Voices and ReadingBoards involve the entire class in reading and reciting essential language.

Speech Emergence. At the Speech Emergence stage all Kagan Structures provide appropriate language production opportunities. Because students at this stage are making many errors and do not have a large vocabulary, structures that accommodate brief responses include all students fully. RallyRobin, Numbered Heads Together, Showdown, Match Mine and Spin-N-Review are examples of structures that are excellent for use at this stage with no accommodations required.

Intermediate Fluency and Fluency. All Kagan Structures are fully appropriate for students at Intermediate Fluency and Fluency. Talking Chips, Timed Pair Share,

Spin-N-Think and One Stray all structure opportunities for extended language production.

What may be even more important than the opportunities for language acquisition in Kagan Structures is their focus on higher-level thinking and cognitive development. Through full inclusion in classroom activities that require understanding concepts and applying new knowledge, language learners have full access to curriculum. Language proficiency truly can be acquired simultaneously with content mastery and achievement of challenging performance standards through Kagan structures.

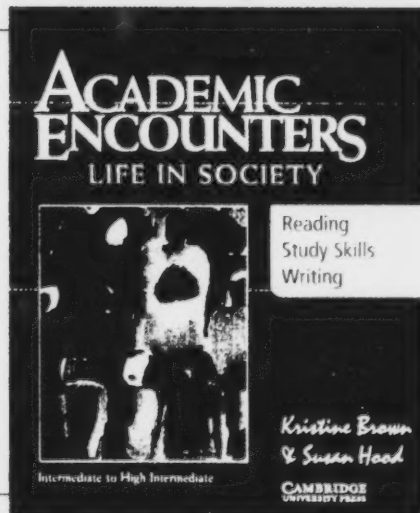
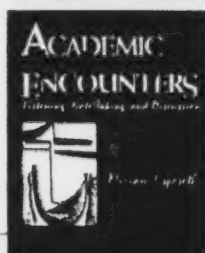
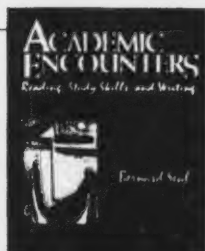
Spencer Kagan, Ph.D., is a former professor of psychology and education at the University of California. Presently he directs Kagan Publishing and Professional Development, San Clemente, CA. www.KaganOnline.Com

Julie High, M.A., taught high school ESL and French and directed Title VII project services for ELL students in grades pre-K through eight in North Monterey County Unified School District in Moss Landing, CA. She is a National Certified Trainer for Kagan Professional Development.

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Imagine Teaching with these Technologies

We've discussed the language teaching potential of technologies in use and technologies under development. Now imagine that computing tools not yet invented span the range of possibilities and whims. Some of the more intriguing possibilities, and those that could have a great impact how language is taught and learned, are discussed in this final column on "new" technologies.

Perfect Voice Recognition: Current voice recognition packages claim to be over 90% accurate after training. However, speakers with a variety of accents will not achieve this same level. Perfect voice recognition would be 100% accurate for speakers of any variety of English, making it useful at all levels of language and computing proficiency.

True Virtual Reality: Instead of wearing clunky equipment or having to go to a special place to experience a simulated environment, sensory implants and real-time computing put the learner directly into the environment. This would have the same benefits (and dangers) of holographic and current virtual reality technologies, but with the added convenience of anytime/any place computing.

True Artificial Intelligence: Some educators still fear that technology can take the place of teachers. computer-assisted language learning professionals have commented on the lack of verity of that statement with the current state of technology. True AI, however, does have the potential to function as a teacher, with its ability for creativity, responsivity, initiative and to speak any language known to man. In time, perhaps every language learner will be able to have his/her own teacher, linked with other teachers around the globe. Lucky for us, such intelligence is still a dream for the future. In the meantime, our jobs are (relatively) safe.

"Black Box" Reader: This technology would assist researchers in finding out exactly how the brain learns and processes language. This could lead to the perfecting of the "one best method" that many language teachers long for and to language achievement for all learners.

Language Implants: The Black Box reader could lead to the development of language implants. Whether instant translators (a la Star Trek) or wired-in language ability, I have to admit that this is one that I hope to live to see (and use). It may end up rendering our profession and this discussion useless, but it would make every page of the World Wide Web accessible, and we'd be too busy to

worry about it.

It is unclear what the future will hold for the development of new technologies and their use in language learning environments. What can you imagine?

The point of this discussion is that, as we plan for the distant and not-so-distant future, we continue to think of ways that technologies can serve as tools to enrich learning by offering a broad definition of contexts for learning, enhancing opportunities for interaction and other crucial conditions, and providing more diverse and more authentic access to language data.

Joy Egbert teaches ESL and technology at Washington State University and can be reached at jegbert@wsu.edu. This new technology series of columns has been an adaptation of an academic session presentation for TESOL 2002.

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- ☐ wrong
- ☐ invalid
- ☐ victim
- ☐ paralytic

→

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

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NCELA Spells RESOURCE!

BY PATRICIA ANNE DICERBO

Each month, as many as 100,000 people contact the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA) via the website, email or phone. A good number of these visitors are teachers working with English language learners (ELLs) in bilingual, English as a second language (ESL), foreign language, or general education classrooms. Although they teach different grade levels and content, they are all committed to their English language learners and they all have questions about effective practice. They know NCELA is a good source of information.

What is NCELA?

NCELA was reauthorized under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is an information resource center that collects, analyzes, synthesizes and disseminates information about language instruction educational programs and related programs for limited English proficient students.

What that means for anyone involved in the education of ELLs—whether working in public or private schools, community organizations, school district offices, institutions of higher education, or state education agencies—is that there are resources available to help. That includes resources for teachers and program administrators or for university students preparing to enter the teaching profession.

NCELA has a long history. Since it began in 1977 as the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE), it has consistently been recog-

nized as critical to the education of ELLs. Under the recent reauthorization, NCBE became NCELA. Its funding agency, the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBELA), became the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELAA).

Since funding for NCELA comes from the U.S. Department of

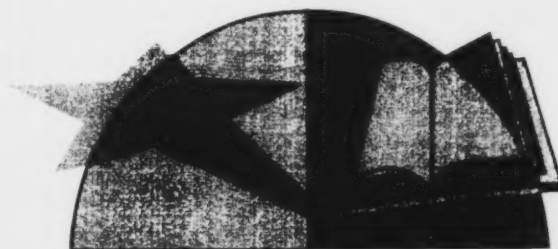
naturally and linguistically diverse students in American schools.” (*Education Week*, <http://edweek.com>) One of the best ways to tap into this resource is through the NCELA website (www.ncele.gwu.edu), which offers language education professionals access to new research, policies, and practical classroom applications.

A central feature of the website is the large number of full-text documents which cover areas of education that are of special interest to the field. These subject areas include assessment and accountability, curriculum and instruction, education programs, education research, history, legislation and policy, language and culture, parent and community involvement, professional development, and special education, as well as many other resources.

Each subject area includes research and policy articles, curriculum materials and links to additional sources of information. Under “curriculum and instruction,” for example, are the following titles for ESL, EFL, foreign language and general education teachers: 1) Foreign language

teaching: What the U.S. can learn from other countries; 2) Help! They don’t speak English: Starter kit for primary teachers; 3) Teaching language minority students in elementary school; and 4) Teaching secondary language minority students.

The “parent and community involvement” section presents ways to develop community-wide participation in education, along with information on family literacy and school-to-work transitions. Selected publications are available in multiple languages. For example, *If Your Child Learns in Two Languages: A Parent’s Guide* is published in English, Spanish, Haitian,



NCELA

**National Clearinghouse for
English Language Acquisition
& Language Instruction Educational Programs**

Education, most resources are free. However, it is not a government office. NCELA is operated by The George Washington University’s Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Institute for Education Policy Studies, Center for the Study of Language and Education. Members of NCELA staff include former and current teachers of ELLs, policymakers, and linguists, many whom are pursuing graduate degrees in education.

What Does NCELA Offer?

In the words of one source, NCELA offers “A well-organized clearinghouse of information on the education of cul-



Chinese and Vietnamese.

Also online are searchable **ESL and Foreign Language Resource Databases** with links to curriculum and instructional materials websites, professional education associations, funding sources, publishers of language education materials, online publications and databases, conferences and listservs. The Bibliographic Database contains over 20,000 citations and abstracts of materials addressing language education issues. The National Linguistic Assets Database is a directory of translators and interpreters nationwide.

For many of the teachers and administrators who use the NCELA website, its **State Resources** and **FAQs** (answers to the most frequently asked questions from the field) contain particularly helpful ways to enhance their own knowledge or to inform other teachers, administrators and program staff.

Did you know, for example, that the number of K-12 students with limited English proficiency (LEP students) in the United States grew 105% from 1989-1990 to 1999-2000, and is now well over four million? Maybe you teach in one of the ten states where the LEP student population has increased by more than 300 percent in recent years? Or where over ten percent of the student population is LEP? Then you know that the number and proportion of LEP students affects the kinds of curriculum that can and should be offered.

In ten states (Alabama, Kentucky, Georgia, Nebraska, Idaho, Nevada, Indiana, North Carolina, Kansas, Oregon) the limited English proficient student population has increased by more than 300 percent. In six states (Alaska, Nevada, Arizona, California, Texas, New Mexico) and Puerto Rico over ten percent of the student population is defined as limited English profi-

cient. Information like this can be found in the "Ask NCELA" section of the website. For state-by-state demographics, see NCELA's State Resources.

Many of you also know that while Spanish language speakers represent three-fourths of the LEP student population, it is also common to have speakers of Vietnamese, Hmong, Haitian Creole, Korean, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Navajo, Tagalog, Cambodian, Portuguese, Armenian or Serbo-Croatian. In the 1999-2000 school year, states reported over 400 languages spoken by LEP students nationwide. NCELA's **Language and Culture** section connects to resources relevant to the top twenty of these language groups.

NCELA staff have developed a set of interactive lesson plans to accompany LEP student data. Designed for grades 2-5, the **Sample Lesson Plans to Accompany LEP Student Data Poster** are intended to be completed as a sequential unit that ties themes of immigration, multiculturalism, and U.S. and world geography together with critical language arts and math standards.

Also developed by NCELA staff are **Special Resource Highlight Pages** of links to articles and organizations on special topics. They include accountability and the new ESEA, literacy and ELLs, LEP students and Title I and promoting cultural understanding in the classroom.

The online **Conference Calendar** announces national, state and local professional development opportunities.

This is just a sample of the information on the NCELA website. NCELA staff also provide information by telephone and email. Over 5,000 educators read **NCELA E-News** (Newsline Bulletin and Outlook) with its weekly syntheses of critical issues in the field of educating ELLs: national

education news, education publications, upcoming professional development opportunities, second language curriculum materials, funding announcements and job opportunities. NCELA staff also exhibit at conferences throughout the year—national and regional bilingual education and ESL conferences, the International Reading Association conference and the national Title I conference, among others.

New Projects from NCELA

NCELA staff do not just disseminate information. They are also involved in the development of practical applications of research. Three of the most recent NCELA projects are 1) In the Classroom Toolkit; 2) Assessment Standards for English Language Learners; and 3) Professional online development.

In the Classroom Toolkit

Fifteen of the twenty-one English language learners in Mrs. Porter's tenth grade class are having fun with their assignment. Together and in groups, they have gone through brainstorming sessions, made use of graphic organizers, and finished a first draft of their essays. Mrs. Porter is satisfied that these students are developing their literacy skills, and learning what is needed for their general education coursework. What about the other six? She's not so sure. Her frustration shows when she explains, "I think the problem is they haven't been exposed to the kinds of reading and writing they need at the secondary level. At least three are not fluent in either English or their home language. They also haven't had a lot of practice studying or taking notes. I thought my education and experience had prepared me well enough, but some of my students are just not getting it. I have to try something different."

Mrs. Porter's classroom is just one

You Can Participate in an NCELA Project

Professional online development is a beginning project. You can help with its development by emailing NCELA (dterry@ncbe.gwu.edu or sklein@ncbe.gwu.edu) with your answers to two questions:

1. What modules would be the most helpful to you?
 - a) Important differences between first and second language development
 - b) Effective ways to improve the literacy skills of ELLs
 - c) How to modify lesson plans to best educate ELLs
 - d) _____

2. What type of design would be most helpful? Being able to:
 - a) Choose content by grade level as well as by subject
 - b) Discuss with other teachers, across the country, issues regarding the education of ELLs
 - c) Receive creditIf you chose c: What kind of credit do you think teachers in your area could receive from your state or district for completing the work in a module?
 - 1) University undergraduate credit
 - 2) University graduate credit
 - 3) Professional development points
 - 4) Continuing education credit

of the kinds of scenarios that the **In the Classroom Toolkit** is designed to address. The Toolkit features strategies and lessons developed by former teachers of ELLs to cover five broad areas of education: school skills, elementary grade-level content, secondary grade-level content, addressing diverse needs and interrupted formal schooling.

Within each area is a list of special challenges for educators, and strategies (tools) that would address each challenge. Every tool is linked to at least one lesson plan or activity illustrating its use for classroom teachers. All of the lessons and activities include a link to the lesson or source, the grade level and the content area. "Lessons in the Toolkit" reflect the Principles of Effective Practice for educating limited English proficient (LEP) students developed by the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education at The George Washington University (1996) and the Checklist for Effective Practices with English Learners provided by Freeman and Freeman (1999).

Assessment Standards for English Language Learners

NCELA and the Council of the Great City Schools have developed the following set of seven assessment standards to guide local school districts in making decisions about when and how ELL students can be included in assessment, in choosing the types of assessments most appropriate for ELL students, and in creating and using assessments to show what ELL students know and can do:

1. Assessment systems must include all ELL students and must address their unique characteristics in an appropriate manner.

2. Assessment systems must allow ELL students to demonstrate what they know and can do with regard to both language proficiency and academic achievement.

3. Assessments for ELL students' language proficiency and academic achievement must be aligned with high standards, challenging curriculum, and quality instruction in order to inform program design and implementation.

4. Assessments for ELL students must be designed for and, as appropriate, normed on the student population in order to produce valid information for decision-making.

5. Assessment systems must include multiple types of assessments, with different types of tasks and ways of scoring, for language proficiency and

academic achievement.

6. Assessment systems must maintain longitudinal, student-specific information for ELL students, including academic achievement, language proficiency, and demographic characteristics.

ESL Magazine's Online Poll

Are you familiar with the resources and services of the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (formerly the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education)?

37% Yes
63% No

www.eslmag.com

7. Assessment data on ELL students' language proficiency and academic achievement, disaggregated for student groups at student, school, and district levels, must be communicated in a timely manner to all stakeholders clearly, accurately, and in understandable language(s).

Professional Online Development

A new service NCELA is developing for prospective and current teachers is Professional Online Development (POD). It is intended to give teachers working with ELLs the opportunity to enhance their own learning and a place where they can experience a sense of community among peers. This will be an interactive, distance-learning course of study that will provide hands-on experiential learning regarding the education of ELLs—the tools, strategies

and resources needed by teachers working with ELLs. POD is expected to offer professional development hours, re-certification hours, or possibly graduate-level credit in such areas as teaching basic and academic literacy, modifying or adapting lessons, second language acquisition and assessment. Each of these areas will be covered within a separate teaching module designed to be both comprehensive and practical.

How else can NCELA help?

If you think NCELA can help you, email your questions to the NCELA helpline (askncbe@ncbe.gwu.edu), mail correspondence to NCELA, The George Washington University Center for the Study of Language and Education, 2121 K Street, NW, Suite 260, Washington, DC 20037, fax a request to 1-800-531-9347, or speak directly to a staff member at 1-800-321-6223.

Patricia Anne DiCerbo is a research associate with the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Education Instructional Programs at The George Washington University.

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P.L. 107-110, 107th Congress, (enacted). Signed into law on January 8, 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 amends and reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, which includes most federal K-12 education programs. The legislation is online at <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/library/policy/nclb.htm>.

The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education. Evaluation Assistance Center East.(1996). *Promoting excellence: Ensuring success for limited English proficient students*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University.

Compu Teach Offers New Grant for Schools and Districts

Compu-Teach announces a second grant to schools and districts across the U.S. As before, the new grant offer is limited to the first ten districts that apply from each state. This grant includes on-site training and site licenses for their most recent K-12 CD-ROM releases for Windows and Macintosh. In exchange for feedback on how the software works with the curriculum the grant offers each participating school up to \$7,100 in software licenses and training for less than \$1000.

Compu-Teach completed their first grant offering on their original titles. Over 5000 schools participated. Two updates have been recently completed: See the USA and Joshua's Reading Machine.

The newest JRM CD-ROM Ver.3.0 received the coveted Media and Methods Award. Over 1000 teacher evaluations may be found at: <http://www.compu-teach.com/feedback>

Compu-Teach added twelve unique CD-ROM releases to their new offering covering Math, Reading, Problem Solving, Music, Violence Prevention, teen ethics and Spanish language.

David Urban, President of Compu-Teach said, "A limited number of schools will be given the opportunity to order our new CD-ROM titles with a 70% cost reduction grant."

Compu-Teach Grant Coordinators may be reached at **800-448-3224 ext. 234**.

Shall We Dance?

Dear Richard:

I seem to remember that when I was in junior high school, our English teacher taught us that *shall* is used to express the future with first and third person. Of course, you never hear Americans say *I shall do it before I leave* or *They shall arrive by five o'clock*, and I noticed that you made no mention of *shall* in the last issue. Does that mean that *shall* is extinct in American English? What should I tell my students?

—James Eldridge, Queens, NY

Dear James:

Your junior high teacher was correct and we all should know how *shall* is used, but your teacher was somewhat out of date if he/she didn't mention how this modal is basically on the way out. *Shall* isn't quite extinct, but its use has become greatly restricted, especially in American and Canadian varieties of English. In those varieties, *shall* is used in very formal speech to make suggestions, which are in the form of a question: *Shall I serve lunch on the lanai?* / *Shall we dance?* It's interesting to note that *shall* is being used less and less as a future modal even in the UK and Australia.

Dear Grammar Guy:

I'm not an ESL teacher (I teach theater, public speaking and debate in a high school), but I do have contact with LEP students. A colleague of mine told me about your column in *ESL Magazine* and suggested I write to you, so I've got two questions that I hope you'll answer for me.

First off, I overheard one of my students giving directions to his house for a party, and he said, "Go on Oakton Street until Asbury Avenue and turn left." I knew something didn't sound right to me and realized it was his use of *until*. When I had him alone a little while later, I told him he should have said *to* instead of *until*. Of course, he immediately asked me why *until* was wrong, and I really didn't know how to respond. *Until* is wrong, isn't it? And if it is, why is it?

Secondly, can you give me a simple explanation of the difference between *at* and *by* when you're talking about time, like saying *at three o'clock* as opposed to *by three o'clock*? Thanks very much. —Julia Waters, Evanston, IL

Dear Julia:

I'm very happy your colleague said you should write in. I can give you answers to your two questions that you'll find simple and easy to communicate to your LEP students.

We use *until* when talking about time, days, dates, or actions, and it represents the end of some period of time or situation: *The dentist will be out of the office until one o'clock.* / *She won't stop trying until she gets it right.* *To*, on the other hand, is used for traveling directions and means there will be a change in the directions at that point: *Go on Oakton Street to Asbury Avenue and turn left.*

As to your second question, *at* means exactly that moment, so *Be here at three o'clock* means "I don't want you to arrive until that exact moment when the clock strikes three." *By* means "any time before but not later than," so if I say *Be here by three o'clock*, I mean it's all right for you to arrive before three, but don't show up after three. I hope that clears these

questions up for you.

Now here are the answers to last issue's "Food for Thought," which was a two-parter: (1) What are the rules for placing *enough* before or after what it modifies?

We normally place *enough* before a countable or uncountable noun (enough money, enough friends), although there are rare occasions when people say or write *enough* after the noun (money enough, friends enough). We always place *enough* after adjectives and adverbs (told enough, fast enough).

(2) What's the difference in use between *enough* and *enough of*?

We've already covered *enough* and there's really not much that needs to be said to explain how we use *of* with *enough*. I could get very technical and long-winded, but it's so much nicer to keep things simple, especially for our students. The long and short of it is that if we follow *enough* with anything more than a bare noun (e.g., with a possessive adjective or an article), we need to add *of* (enough of my friends, enough of the time, enough of this). So there you have it!

And here's the "Food for Thought" question for this issue: What's the difference between the verbs "lie" and "lay," and why do most English speakers confuse them? (Of course, I'm not thinking of "lie" meaning "not tell the truth.")

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida.

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Teachers Should Read for Fun, Too!

BY DANIEL B. FREEMAN

Have you ever wanted to read a novel encompassing the ESL experience? Now you have three chances. The following three new books all have strong ESL subplots as well as interesting story lines. The cross-cultural depictions should be of particular interest to any ESL/EFL professional.

Never Fade Away

by William Hart, Fithian Press, 2002

This seemingly autobiographic novel brings John Goddard, an ex-Vietnam war veteran, to a small California college to teach ESL. His nightmare remembrances of his war experiences and his psychological problems as a young man have affected him deeply. He now faces a new problem. The politics of academia! This theme will enthrall all ESL teachers.



Goddard's ESL class considers him a sensitive and devoted teacher. One of his students, Tina Le, is a beautiful young woman who has had an exciting and tragic experience escaping from Vietnam. Goddard wants to help her publish her story and at the same time, he is writing his own story. The two of them work together and their collaboration soon becomes the story of their romance. The cultural differences are wonderfully portrayed.

The book is written in the epistolary manner and these letters back and forth could be confusing except that the author realistically portrays the differences in language usage between the foreign student and the native speaker so that the reader is never at a loss as to who is speaking. Hart's accuracy in portraying the foreign student's writing is uncanny.

Disturbing The Peace

by Nancy Newman, Avon Books, 2002

Lively, exciting, sexy. This book is about searching for one's birth mother. Sarah Bridges is living with a handsome young man named Stoddard. She teaches ESL and loves it. She has Stoddard to keep her busy and satisfied, but Sarah is not totally fulfilled. She has been brought up by her father and his second wife, but she wants to know her birth mother and why she gave her up for adoption. It is said that you should be careful what you wish for because you may get your wish. Sarah gets her wish.



When Sarah finally finds her mother, she is not what Sarah expected. Mother and daughter are not alike and they have problems relating to each other. Their relationship is rocky and funny at the same time.

The theme of ESL is not the main interest in this book. Sarah's sophisticated lifestyle, her search for her mother, and her romantic interests are the main themes, but the ESL references are accurate and hold the reader's interest. Read it for fun and the underlying mother-daughter relationship.

The Language of Goodbye

by Maribeth Fischer, Plume (Penguin Group), 2001

The title of this book says it all. Husbands and wives leave each other for new lovers and can't find closure. It is about loss, language and love.

Anne, an ESL teacher, leaves her husband Carter to be with Will. Will leaves Kayla and his five year old daughter to be with

Anne. At the same time, we see Sengue—a Korean-born student of Anne's—deal with love and loss in her own life, with her own cultural ways of saying "Good-bye." Sengue leaves her lover and child in Korea to reunite with her husband Keewahn and live in the United States. Everyone seems to leave every one else and at times it is a bit confusing, though very gripping because of the differences in cultural expectations and traditions.



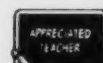
The various ways of saying good-bye are reflective of the cultural differences represented in the story line. The story is somewhat of a downer. There is so much sadness and "Sturm und Drang" that you sort of hope it can work out, but doubt it.

Nevertheless this book is very readable. The juxtaposition of the foreign cultures versus American culture comes off as very real and ESL teachers and students will find themselves understanding the problems of the characters in Ann's classroom. The book seems like a script for a soap opera and one can get addicted to reading it.

Daniel B. Freeman is an ESL teacher who has taught in New York and Latin America. He is the author of an number of ESL books including Speaking of Survival (Oxford University Press) and co-author of the Longman Photo Dictionary and the Connections Readers Series (McGraw-Hill).

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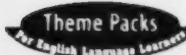
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Teaching Vocabulary for Peace Education

BY FRANCISCO GOMES DE MATOS, PH.D.

The renowned British linguist-lexicographer-encyclopedist and ESL specialist David Crystal made the memorable remark, "Vocabulary is the Everest of a language" (Crystal 1995, 116). I agree with him and would add that just as vocabulary can be variable, varied and vast, so can its acquisition. Thus, there are many ways of climbing the vocabulary mountain—to borrow that scholar's valuable metaphor—depending on the background, goals, motivation and systematic preparation of those engaged in the fascinating and challenging process of gaining, sustaining and refining lexical competence in a language. I would also stress that although approaches to vocabulary teaching have become diversified—cf. Carter's chapter on vocabulary *The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (Carter and Nunan 2001)—that progress has been mostly quantitative, rather than qualitative, especially if we consider a still neglected dimension in ESL education: helping learners to humanize the way they use their English. By "humanize the way they use their English," I mean having the ability to use—and to self-monitor, to some extent—vocabulary that can contribute to building, enhancing, promoting, sustaining and maximizing peace both between and among persons, groups, communities and nations.

Curiously, the humanizing function of language use has been left implicit in formulations of traits of language, a point which I have made in another article which also includes a challenge to twenty-first century language teacher education: to address the humanizing dimension of language. This is still in its applicational infancy and has largely resulted from insights inspired by traditions such as human linguistic rights, peace education, peace psychology and the emerging area of peace linguistics (Gomes de Matos 2001). For an early exploratory experience in translating ideas from peace studies into

classroom practice, see my article "Teaching Peace-Promoting Vocabulary," in the January 2002 issue of *New Routes* magazine (Gomes de Matos 2002).

The twofold aim of this article is first, to show ESL educators how vocabulary teaching can become humanizingly meaningful through the use of techniques inspired by some of the interdependent traditions to peace pointed out above; and second, to make a plea for ESL teachers and learners to humanize their repertoires of "best practices" in vocabulary teaching and learning (for an overview of the latter, see Nation 2002).



Due to space limitations, the suggested techniques will be presented with a focus on "how-to." Thus, theoretical foundations—the underlying rationale—will not be made explicit. The techniques and examples provided reflect the author's explorations in applying the key concept of "communicative peace," which I coined in the early '90s.

Techniques for Humanizing Vocabulary Use

The list below illustrates ways of using peace-promoting vocabulary in varied contexts and situations, either for in-class comprehension and production or for applied research purposes.

Technique 1: THRIL. The label for this technique, THRIL, stands for the "threefold repetition of an initial letter." This is a probing of the well-known device of "alliteration," which involves a sequence of words beginning with the same sound or letter for achieving some communicative effect. A classic example is Caesar's *veni, vidi, vici* (I came, I saw, I conquered) which he said to the Roman Senate, upon his quick victory over King Pharnaces in Pontus. Given the mnemonic nature of this technique (mnemonics is still underexplored and underresearched in ESL vocabulary acquisition and use) many examples are provided so that ESL teachers and students can challenge themselves to create "peaceful reminders" in brainstorming sessions, thus contributing to what could more broadly be called ESL peace literacy.

The very first word in each statement or "Guideline for Peace" should be a verb form. Criteria such as the humanizing depth of vocabulary used, its level of formality, the naturalness and appropriateness of the resulting sentence and its frequency of use can also be considered during the assessment phase of such vocabulary activation.

To enhance visual recall in this presentation of the technique, the threefold repetition of the same "word-initial letter" precedes each example. Fuller contexts for each illustrative example are to be provided by learners and teachers in shared humanizing vocabulary practices. Challenge your students to produce both memorizable and memorable sayings that can lead to face-to-face discussion in class or through online communication.

Examples of the THRIL Technique:

AAA—Avoid aggressive assertions. Accept divergence as an anticipation of agreement. Advise and advocate, rather than admonish. Act in accordance with altruism.

BBB—Be a peaceful bridge between persons, groups and cultures.

CCC—Consider (verbal) conflicts constructively. Convince through cooperation, rather than competition or coercion. Contribute to a culture of compassion. Cooperate cordially with classmates or colleagues. Consider controversies constructively.

DDD—Defend democratic ideals with determination. Dignify your daily dialogues with other persons. Do your daily deed for human dignity. Disagree with someone through dignified discourse.

EEE—Express empathy and encouragement.

FFF—Foster freedom and friendliness.

GGG—Generate goodness and generosity.

HHH—Honor humanism and humanitarianism. Harbor humaneness and humanity. Halt verbal harm and humiliation.

III—Integrate apparently incompatible ideas.

JJJ—Join the family of justice joyfully.

KKK—Keep kindling your kindness to others.

LLL—Let all live in peace in all lands. Let liberty be your light.

MMM—Maximize mediation and meditation for peace. Monitor your messages for their moral value.

NNN—Nourish and nurture peaceful negotiations. Negotiate new ways of promoting non-violence.

OOO—Organize your vocabulary for optimism and other-centeredness.

PPP—Perceive persons as peace partners. Promote a passion for peace in all places. Prepare yourself as a peace patriot.

QQQ—Quarantine all querulous questioning in a quarrel.

RRR—Reassert the need to restore reconciliation. Reaffirm your right to reply to criticism.

SSS—Support a safe and secure environment. Support and sustain human solidarity. Seek mutually satisfying solutions.

TTT—Teach in a spirit of tact and tolerance. Temper your temperament with tenderness.

UUU—Upgrade universal feelings of union/unity.

VVV—Verify the validity of your values. Veto all forms of verbal and visual violence.

WWW—Weigh your words wisely.

XXX—X-in cultural and linguistic diversity and X-out xenophobia and intolerance.

YYY—Yearn for permanent peace in your yard.

ZZZ—Zero in on peace zealously as

the zenith.

Technique 2: Paraphrasing peaceful quotations. Challenge your students to paraphrase a peaceful statement (for example, by peacemakers from different cultures or traditions) by replacing the author's vocabulary with informal equivalents. Books of quotations can be used for this.

Technique 3: Finding sayings about peace. Challenge your students to find inspiring sayings about peace (for example, from religious leaders, Nobel Peace Prize winners) and to discuss the possible humanizing impact, appeal and value of the vocabulary therein.

Technique 4: Writing about communicating peacefully. Challenge your students to write an essay on the importance of learning how to communicate peacefully with persons in different contexts: at home, at school, at work, in places of worship, etc. Then tell them to exchange their essays and to look for similarities and differences in their descriptions and to relate their contributions to the "culture of peace" in their countries.

Technique 5: Essay writing on peace efforts and achievements. Challenge your students to share the activity of writing an essay on such topics as what has been or hasn't been done for world peace, what could or should be done, what can be done for peace at home, school, work, etc. Students could compile a peace-promoting vocabulary (a mini-glossary could be the goal) and vocabulary choices would be justified in terms of their possible humanizing value. Bilingual students could produce such reference works in two languages.

Technique 6: Replacing dehumanizing uses of vocabulary. Challenge your students to replace insulting, offensive, destructive or intimidating vocabulary with constructive items. Among insults that could be used for such peaceful translating of communicatively harmful messages: gender-related or ethnic insults, cross-cultural insults, etc.

Technique 7: Looking for peaceful proverbs across cultures. Challenge your students to collect and share with classmates proverbs about peace from different cultures and provide their equivalents in English. Intercultural similarities and differences could be emphasized.

Technique 8: Looking for peaceful vocabulary in ESL textbooks, grammars and dictionaries. Challenge your students (and yourselves) to identify peaceful vocabulary in textbooks and to note the relative frequency or absence of such humanizing lexical uses. Try to account for the author's treatment of such communicatively vital aspects of English language use.

Technique 9: Identifying key concepts in works in the areas of peace studies. Challenge your students (and yourselves) to identify key concepts in publications dealing with peace and conflict, especially in their handling of communication for peaceful purposes. Examples of such core concepts: cooperation, trust (mutual), mediation, negotiation, self-regulation, self-monitoring and solidarity. Discuss the implications of such concepts for building up communicative peace.

Technique 10: Engaging in simulated communicatively challenging or threatening interactions. Challenge your students to play different roles in situations where violations of communicative peace took place. (Samples from videotaped verbal conflicts could be used for this activity). Instead of criticizing someone without proper evidence, a learner would be asked to harmonize with a conversational partner; instead of retaliating or letting a discussion escalate, a learner would opt for a peace-restoring communicative style, etc.

Technique 11: Enhancing the humanizing force of dialogues. Challenge your students to create and act out scripts (brief conversations) in which the humanizing force of the vocabulary can be easily perceived by groups of visitors (parents, school administrators, representatives of the local public and private sectors, etc.).

Preparing ESL Educators to be Peace Patriots

Preparing ESL educators for their challenging mission as peace patriots calls for carefully planned cooperative action among the persons and institutions involved. In the ESL context, teaching vocabulary for peace could consist of such preparatory steps as these:

1) Introducing ESL educators to the philosophical, cross-cultural, ecological, psychological, anthropological, political, and linguistic (communicative) foundations of human rights, justice and peace. A peace-promoting ESL team could be organized in a department at a university, high school, elementary school or in other contexts in which this type of communicative action could benefit from both economic and administrative support from decision-makers. The challenge of finding appropriate trainers with appropriate peaceful communication skills can be remedied through interdepartmental, interinstitutional workshops, seminars and the like.

2) Fostering and nurturing an atmosphere of communicating constructively in the school community—locally produced newspapers, newsletters, e-mail and the like could become powerful agents for

peaceful communication—especially so in language learning classrooms (the focus should be extended to the other languages taught in the curriculum). Thus, the fundamental concepts of peace and communicative peace could be presented to all those sharing the vision and the mission of peace building so that both can become not just a universal goal but a reality.

3) Encouraging personal and/or institutional membership in organizations devoted to peace education such as the International Peace Research Association (IPRA, www.ipra.org) or special interest groups such as the TESOL organization's TESOLers for Social Responsibility.

4) Seeking and providing funds for school libraries to start a specialized section on peace studies, peace education and language education for peace.

5) Establishing a mailing list for an exchange of views, insights and classroom experiences on how to sensitize teachers and learners of English to the need for learning to use that language, all languages, in fact, for humanizing, peace-promoting, peace-building, peace-sustaining purposes.

As the twenty-first century unfolds, we educate for challenges, some of which can be unpredictably destructive and dehumanizing: September 11, 2001 is a reminder of how poorly prepared we are

to implement the wisdom of peacemakers who urge that in order to live peacefully, we should educate and be educated about peace. In the face of such formidable problems, the dimension of communicating peacefully should also be prioritized—hence, my plea for you and your students to become promoters of communicative peace. As a point of departure, consider classroom testing some of the suggestions I have made, and, more importantly, creating your own strategies for teaching—challenging!—your students to climb not only the highest but the deepest piece of land: the mountain of communicative peace.

Since no one, no culture has a monopoly on the concept of peace, let's share a world in which we can exercise our rights as planetary citizens and also fulfill our obligations as deeply committed peace partners. May I close in a cross-cultural spirit by saying, "Peace!" "Paz!" "Saalam!" "Shalom!"

Dr. Francisco Gomes de Matos teaches applied linguistics to English and Portuguese students at the Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil. He is president of the Board of Trustees of Associacao Brasil America, a Binational Center (www.abaweb.org). His current interests are applied peace linguistics and teachers and learners' intercultural rights

and responsibilities. He can be reached at fcgm@hotmail.com.br.

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An Introductory Bibliography to Peace Linguistics

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, Ph.D.

Areas in Peace Studies

There are several areas within the burgeoning macrofield of peace studies. A good resource is *Peacebuilding*, the newsletter of the Peace Education Commission (PEC) of the International Peace Research Association (www.uwm.edu/Dept/Peace/pecnews.pfd). The peace-focused study areas are relatively young, having emerged as disciplines in the twentieth century, from about the mid-forties.

The area with the longest tradition is **conflict resolution**, established after World War II. For an introduction to conflict management, see *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution* edited by M. Deutsch and P.T. Coleman (Jossey-Bass, 2000). An overlapping area is that of **peace and conflict studies**, identified in the yearbook series published by UNESCO from 1980 on. Peace education is the oldest domain, having emerged in Europe and the United States in the early sixties. For a recent theory-to-practice handbook in peace education, see Betty Reardon's *Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective* (UNESCO, 2001).

A young member in the peace studies family is **peace psychology**. See a recent issue of *Peace and Conflict, Journal of Peace Psychology*, co-sponsored by the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence, a division of the American Psychology Association.

Another related field is that of **cross-cultural negotiation**. A well-written example is Raymond Cohen's *Negotiating across Cultures* (United States Institute of Peace-USIP, 1997). Another important USIP work is C.W. Freeman's *The Diplomat's Dictionary* (1997). See its entries on communication, cordiality, courtesy, cultural differences, language, mediation/mediator, negotiation/negotiator, peace, peacemakers, peacemaking.

The youngest member of the peace studies family is **peace linguistics**, which is defined in David Crystal's *The Penguin Dictionary of Language* (1999): "A climate of opinion which emerged during the 1990s among many linguists and language teachers, in which linguistic principles, methods, findings, and applications were seen as a means of promoting peace and human rights. The approach emphasizes the value of linguistic diversity and multilingualism, both internationally and intranationally, and asserts the need to foster language attitudes which respect the dignity of individual speakers and speech communities" (pp. 254-255).

A Bibliographic Timeline of Peace Education

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Hymes, D. Personal Communication. 30 August. The renowned U.S. anthropologist (who coined the influential concept of "communicative competence") states: "I am glad that you have called attention to the communicative dimension and have associated it with human rights.... So far as I know, you are the first person to connect the communicative dimension directly with the notion of peace."

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English Teaching In Argentina

BY BLANCA ARAZI

People in the United States often think of English language teaching in Latin America as monolithic and as a bastion for American English. Not so for Argentina. This country of approximately 40 million people in the southern most tip of South America (the largest country in the "Southern Cone" which consists of Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay) has had a myriad of English language teaching activities at all levels for many decades—most of it in British English.

British English versus American English

The variety of English in the elementary and secondary schools is almost totally British English, while the academic, industrial and business sectors tend to have some American English. One of the primary reasons for this is that the British Council has always been extremely active in promoting British English and Britain in Argentina. The origins of this lie in the British founded schools—many of which were established in the late nineteenth century. These bilingual schools offered an English medium curriculum for half the day while fulfilling the needs of the national Spanish curriculum in the other half. These private schools were very successful and extremely prestigious and led to the creation of other bilingual British-run schools throughout the country that follow a similar format.

The British Council

In addition, the British Council also offers continuing support for lectures, cultural fairs, seminars and conferences throughout Argentina. The Council strongly supports teacher development activities and brings British English language specialists (an average of five a year) to promote British courses for students and teachers alike. The most pres-

tigious sponsorship is the British Council's short and long term programs for students (16-year-olds and up) and teachers to study the English language and culture in the United Kingdom. For study abroad, nine out of ten students and teachers choose the United Kingdom over the United States. This pro-British or perhaps anti-American sentiment is echoed throughout the

American English presence. Indeed, the Fulbright Commission has made some inroads and the 16 Binational Centers within the country represent the American English language and cultural perspective.

The Fulbright Commission administers Teacher Exchange Awards and Administrator Exchange Awards between educators in the United States and those in Argentina. These awards enable teachers to exchange jobs for one semester and administrators (school principals and other high level administrators) to exchange jobs for four weeks.

The Fulbright Commission keeps a low profile in Argentina and not many Argentines are aware of the interesting educational opportunities they offer. The few Argentine teachers who have taken advantage of these exchanges have mixed feelings about the outcome of their participation because there is still a strong anti-American attitude that does not allow them to apply what they have learned or even publish their contributions in local teacher magazines.

In addition to administering the Exchange programs, the Fulbright Commission operates a reference library and an advisory service for people interested in studying in the United States, regardless of whether they are applying for a Fulbright award. Among other things, the library includes comprehensive information on graduate programs, standardized admission tests, catalogs from universities in the United States, references on financial aid and a database of universities and colleges in the United States. Hundreds of people consult the Commission's library each year.

Binational Centers

Binational Centers were set up in almost every province in Argentina shortly after World War II. Binational Centers are autonomous institutions dedicated to the



country—not only in English language teaching classrooms. The only English speaking newspaper—the *Buenos Aires Herald*—is 90% British, and there is little room for American viewpoints.

The Fulbright Commission

This is not to say that there is no

promotion of mutual understanding between the host country (Argentina, in this case) and the United States. English teaching is usually a major component of their cultural, educational and information activities. Binational Centers often work in close cooperation with American embassies overseas but are independent in their financial and administrative management.

English in Schools

The student population in both public and private schools is quite heterogeneous and includes students of all ages and proficiency levels. Students represent diverse cultural and economic backgrounds. We have Asian, European and Latin American students in Argentina. The Latin American students are generally from Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. The only ones whose educational system is similar to ours are Uruguayans. Despite this diversity in backgrounds, the goals for elementary students learning English include understanding English songs, working with computers, playing American games, understanding cartoons and being able to watch TV programs in English. At the adolescent and young adult level, goals include preparing for the job market, attending school, traveling to English-speaking countries, understanding song lyrics, communicating through the use of PCs and enriching students' own personal lives.

Since 1996, English has been introduced in the public schools at the fourth level of primary education (eight- or nine-year-olds) throughout the country. At present, there is a pilot project in Buenos Aires city schools called Bilingual School, where students will start learning English at the first level of primary school when they are five or six years old. English is also taught in secondary schools for two periods a week.

English is taught at all levels in varying modes. The purely bilingual schools are the Lincoln School (American English and curriculum) and Northlands, St. George's and St. Andrew's (British English and curriculum). There are thousands of semi-bilingual schools that prepare students for the International Baccalaureate and the Cambridge University examinations.

There are also numerous private institutes where English is taught in small groups or which offer private tutoring. Contact hours vary here from two or three times a week to intensive and

super-intensive programs (eight periods a week) depending on students' needs.

English at the University Level

There are public and private universities in Argentina. Public universities are free and there are no entrance exams. Students simply enroll in the different undergraduate programs. The University of Buenos Aires (a public university) has a special English as a foreign language private teaching program in its University Extension Division, which provides English courses to students and to the public at large for very low rates and with very flexible hours. All other universities in the country have introduced the English language as part of their career curriculum design. Most of these are courses in English for academic purposes.

The language learning goals of students at this level are mainly instrumental. They include preparing themselves for travel to English-speaking countries, promotions in their jobs and bettering themselves personally as well as professionally. English is thought to be a valuable asset.

Methodological Approach

During the last 10 years or so, the methodological approach in Argentina changed in order to keep the students interested and attract new ones. The Ministry of Education together with the private sector schools adopted the communicative approach. We credit Krashen's Natural Approach for serving as the main impetus for this radical departure from a past reliance on grammatical approaches as a basis for language development. We are convinced that communicative approaches serve as the central, most important means for gaining linguistic skills. The increasing use of the World Wide Web in the classroom has also led to the use of English as a foreign language in almost all walks of life.

The English language curriculum revolves around topics such as environment, health care, nutrition, exercising, sports, science, education, travel and sociology. No matter what the topic is, it is connected to everyday life as much as possible. All of the activities, including oral and written ones, grow out of these main topics. Grammar and pronunciation are dealt with in a non-traditional way within the lessons themselves and only when needed. Most students appear to internalize message and form simultaneously without formal instruction.

Within classes students work in pairs or small groups in which they actively participate in activities designed to help them move quickly in the inter-language development process. They are frequently involved in "mixers," which are activities involving interaction with the whole class and the facilitator/teacher. Through such activities it is felt that the students will internalize the skills through active and constant participation and by correcting their own mistakes, mostly with the help of peers.

Language Assessment

In order to place students in the appropriate courses, they are given a battery of tests in all four skill areas and vocabulary, grammar and social language. These tests are created by institutes, centers or instructors themselves and include an oral interview and a written multiple choice test. Some institutes give tests upon completion of each academic unit. They also use commercially available tests. Children complete only the oral interview portion of the test unless they already have developed some literacy in their first language and in English.

Once students are placed in the appropriate classes, they are evaluated on an on-going basis through the use of specially designed oral and written testing activities given either twice a year or after each unit to students at each proficiency level.

They are also given the opportunity to measure their proficiency level when appropriate by the use of British or American standardized tests such as KET, PET, FCE, CAE, BEC, GMAT, GRE, TOEFL and CPE (See sidebar page 28 for test names).

Teacher Training

Most Argentine teachers of English have graduated from local universities and colleges; a few of them hold MAs from universities in the United States and the United Kingdom, but not all of them hold teacher training degrees from colleges. Some of them are certified public translators and others are about to graduate from teacher education programs, but their command of the language barely exceeds the Cambridge University First Certificate of Proficiency level.

Regardless of their background or preparation, all teachers are required to attend at least one teacher training program a year. Emphasis is placed on keeping them informed about current trends in the field and on giving them the opportunity to share ideas and discuss

problems. There are numerous in-service sessions where teachers are taught strategies on how to provide comprehensible input and how to facilitate the language acquisition process without interfering with it, without imposing their own ideas and values upon those expressing opinions, or without spoon-feeding the language to their students. In addition, teachers are asked to reflect upon their own experiences in learning a foreign language, on what seemed to facilitate the process for them, on what problems they faced. Each in-service program has a specific focus and stated goals. Teachers from all over Argentina and from neighboring countries participate in in-service programs, making the experience very rich and stimulating.

The Current Economic Situation

Teaching English as a foreign language—whether American or British English—has always been an important part of Argentina's educational system. There is a great deal of strain now with the current economic situation: enrollments at all levels in private schools and universities are decidedly down. The number of teacher development activities has dropped to just two out of the dozens we used to have. Most Argentines are worried about their survival and are terrified of losing the little they still have. The middle class is quickly vanishing.

Yet, there are still many people who plan to go to English-speaking countries in search of a job or a new life. For those of us still teaching English in this country, it is source of pride and passion. Teaching English in Argentina is a most rewarding activity.

Blanca Arazi is an internationally known teacher and teacher trainer working in the Southern Cone of Latin America and in the United States. She holds an MA in TESOL and has been the director of ICANA, the largest Binational Center in Argentina. Ms. Arazi is now at the Centro de Lenguas Extranjeras, Universidad Católica de Salta, Buenos Aires, Argentina. She can be reached at blancaarazi@quicksol.com.ar.

The author thanks Elida Messina for her contributions to this article and her support. Elida Messina has worked with international EFL publishers and book stores in Argentina and the Southern Cone and is currently an EFL consultant for various organizations in Argentina. She can be reached at ebmessi@millic.com.ar.

Standardized Test Acronyms

KET Key English Test (British)

PET Preliminary English Test (British)

FCE First Certificate in English (British)

CAE Certificate in Advanced English (British)

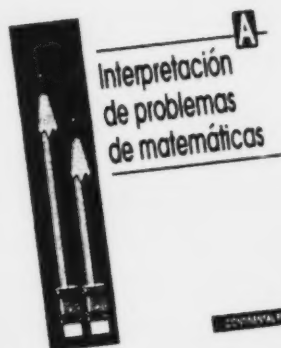
BEC Business English Certificate (British)

CPE Certificate of Proficiency in English (British) Many public school teachers take this test since passing it allows them to teach while they pursue teacher training courses.

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Thomas Nixon's

Employment Focus

Heading into Administration (Part 2)

The following interview is a continuation from the last issue of *ESL Magazine*. Kara Rosenberg is the principal of Palo Alto Adult School and quite active in California TESOL. She offers the following perspective on the life of an ESL program administrator.

TN: How long were you a teacher before becoming an administrator?

KR: I taught in the program for about eight years before slowly working my way into an administrative position. In adult education, many program administrators are paid as teachers in spite of their high level of responsibility. My principal encouraged me to get an administrative credential and he fought to get me an administrative contract as soon as I was qualified.

TN: Are there specific rules or laws that restrict becoming an administrator at your level?

KR: Legally, to be fully responsible for the program, an administrative credential is required. This requirement is often skirted by giving the final authority for teacher supervision to the principal, however. One problem with the credential is that you have to have taught two years full time in order to get an administrative credential in California. [Editor's note: In California adult education, many teachers work in half-time positions.] There is an adult education supervisory credential, but it is limiting.

TN: Why did you decide to move away from teaching?

KR: I like problem solving at all levels. When I see that things could be run better, I itch to roll up my shirt sleeves and dig in. I did both program management and teaching for about ten years. Now I am an adult school principal and, while I love the variety in the job, I really miss the teaching.

TN: Is there anything else that you feel is important for people to know?

KR: Running an ESL program has become progressively more demanding over the last ten years. I am now training a new coordinator to replace me, and I am astonished at the complexity of the job. I learned it gradually over the years. What I am doing now is turning it over piece by piece, a new piece every couple of months. Nurturing someone from the inside would be a grand way to go! Many skills are required: knowledge of the field, good people skills, business skills for managing grants and the ability to multi-task.

INFORMATION REQUEST: Do you make some or all of your income preparing curriculum materials? Contribute to a future column by sending me an e-mail at the address below.

Thomas Nixon is the co-author of Bears' Guide to the Best Education Degrees by Distance Learning (Ten Speed Press). He can be reached at tnixon@cvip.net.

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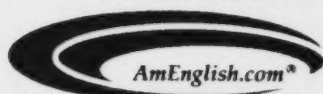
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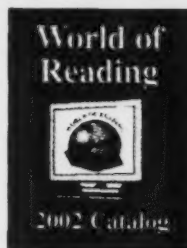
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d. ☐ college/university
e. ☐ IEP/Intensive Language Center
f. ☐ adult education
g. ☐ teacher preparation

3. Do you work in a public or private institution?

a. ☐ public b. ☐ private

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d. ☐ hardware geography materials
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c. ☐ \$5000-\$10,000
d. ☐ Over \$10,000

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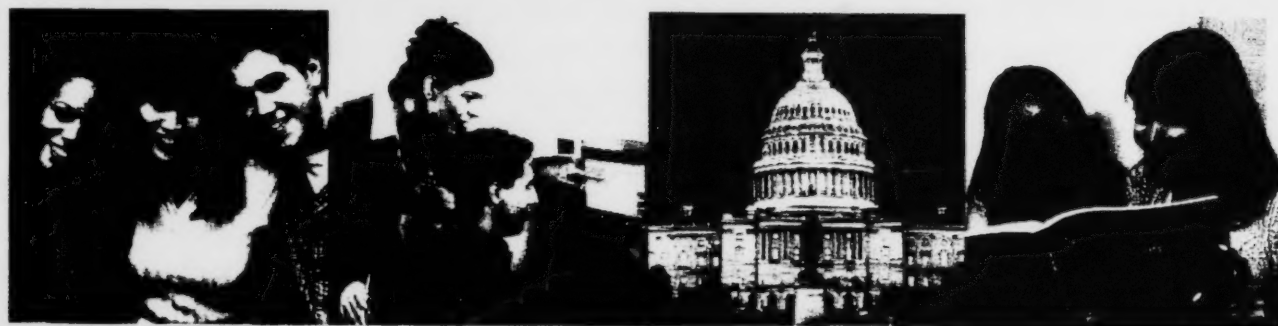
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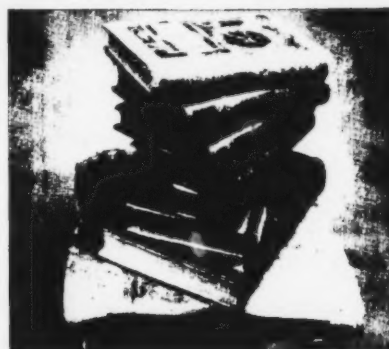


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FEATURES

Steps to Success for Academic Readers <i>by Jean Zukowski/Faust</i>	10
Creating Cross-Cultural Connections <i>by Shelley Fairbairn</i>	16
Combining ESL and Job Training <i>by Stephanie Jones-Vo</i>	22
English Teaching in Taiwan <i>by Johanna Katchen</i>	26



Page 10

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Note.....	4
Letters to the Editor.....	5
News Briefs	6
Conference Calendar	7
Reviews.....	20
Catalog Showcase.....	30



Page 16

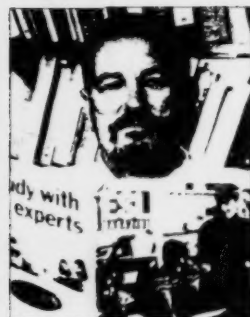
COLUMNS

Christine Meloni's Networky	8
Joy Egbert's Technology	14
Richard Firsten, The Grammar Guy	19
Thomas Nixon's Employment Focus.....	29



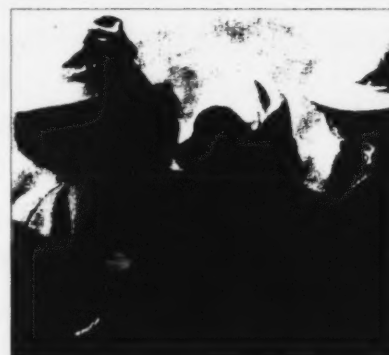
Page 22

Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?



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Director of China
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Page 26



Teaching Language and Lifting Burdens

In addition to teaching English, our job as ESL/EFL teachers is to equip students to cope with situations in which they don't know all the English presented to them. Jean Zukowski/Faust describes a strategy to help academic readers cope with a large amount of text and find the meaning they need without knowing the meaning of all the words. It's an easy way to lift some of the burdens from the shoulders of our students.

How do you help immigrant students and their families connect with people in their new communities? Try a diversity event like the one planned by Shelley Fairbairn, her teaching colleagues and fellow community leaders. Music, singing, poetry, food—all of these things and more can be used to build cross-cultural connections within communities.

Stephaney Jones-Vo describes several very successful programs by which employers in Iowa are finding and training the workers they need among newcomers to this country. Many of these recent immigrants are willing to work but need both job skills training and English language instruction. The results of the job skills/English programs speak for themselves and set an example for employers nationwide and beyond.

Johanna Kratchen reports that Taiwan's thirst for English is growing. Not only do children study English, beginning in elementary school, but people of all ages from all walks of life are studying English. Maybe there's a place there for you to help meet the demand.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

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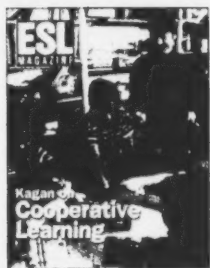
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Kagan on Cooperative Learning

► The "Kagan Structures for English Language Learners" article in the July/August issue reaffirmed for me the strong beliefs I already have in the many benefits of Kagan Cooperative Learning. I have experienced firsthand all of the gains mentioned in the article as a result of using Kagan structures in my classroom with students of all ability levels in all academic areas, so I could clearly identify with the advantages listed for English language learners as well. I especially want to emphasize the fact that Kagan structures are easy to implement into any lesson to increase students' on-task behavior. Students truly appear to enjoy manipulating

content when they are involved in Kagan structures and they are certainly more engaged.

—J. JONES
 Tampa, FL

Vocabulary for Peace Education

► Most interesting to see the way you're teasing out the implications of this approach [THRIL.—Three-fold repetition of Initial Letter]. I don't know of anyone who's worked on the exact type of thing illustrated by THRIL. Alliterative functions is a very neglected area. A three-part structure to rhetoric is a familiar issue, though; "lists of three" are analyzed in relation to political speech-making, for example, in Max Atkinson's *Our Masters' Voices* (Methuen 1984), p. 57ff.—you know the sort of thing, "we beat them yesterday, we beat them today, and we shall beat them tomorrow." A lot of prayers have a three-part structure. Jokes, too. And it turns up in ads as well—"this washing-powder does X, Y and Z." Alliteration reinforces, especially in domains where remembering is crucial—as in ads, where the remembering of the product-name is central to the exercise. It is usually underpinned by a salient rhythm. You'll find a summary of the Atkinson approach in my English Language encyclopedia, p. 378. A brief mention to three-part jokes appears there on p. 409. A good discussion of renaissance triadic con-

structions in rhetoric appears in Walter Nash, *Rhetoric* (Blackwell 1989), p. 140ff.—the sort illustrated by Bacon's "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man."

—DAVID CRYSTAL
Linguistics and English Language
 University of Wales Bangor

► For many years language teachers have been trained in the three P's: present, practice, produce (which McCarthy and Carter now say should be replaced with the three I's: illustration, interaction, induction). Their article is in ELTJ vol. 49:3 (July, '95). I know that such a technique has been used for some time pedagogically, but your approach to using it to teach ethical, moral and democratic values gives it a new twist.

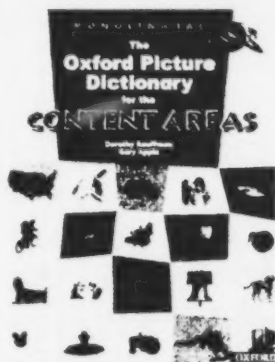
—MARFANNE CLEGG-MURCIA
Applied Linguistics and TESL
 University of California Los Angeles

► [THRIL.] is a fascinating approach. Many years ago, when I was at CAL [Center for Applied Linguistics], one of the Vietnamese staff members said that mnemonics were a major way in which they learned languages in Vietnam. In fact, it often sounded like poetry when he described some of the outcomes.

—JODI CRANDALL
ESOL/Bilingual MA Program
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First Summit and New Newsletter on "No Child Left Behind" Act

The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) and the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) will hold the first Summit on English Language Acquisition under the "No Child Left Behind Act" (NCLB), November 13-15, 2002, in Washington, DC. The Summit will feature leaders in education and government and nationally recognized experts in education. Participants are invited to meet members of Congress who worked on the new law. Sessions will focus on the issues and requirements affecting services to English language learners under Title III of NCLB. Sessions will feature panels, presentations and discussion on such topics as accountability and assessment and meeting annual yearly progress, early childhood education, parental involvement, professional development, building on scientifically based research and effective partnerships between state education agencies and local school districts. Teaching staff, principals, parents, superintendents, school board members and members of school communities are encouraged to attend. For information or registration visit <http://www.barreraassociates.com/>.

The Achiever, a free, biweekly newsletter published by the DOE, provides information about NCLB to parents, teachers, educational leaders and taxpayers. It replaces *Community Update* and includes news and articles about education reform, tips for parents and teachers, and resources related to NCLB. The print version debuted in mid September. To sign up go to <http://www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov/subscribe.html>.

ETS Launches Three-Phase Introduction of the Next Generation TOEFL

Educational Testing Service (ETS) is beginning a three-phase introduction of the next generation Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to English language teachers, students and score users worldwide. The complete next generation TOEFL will premier in the summer of 2004.

The changes to the test are intended to simulate real language experience at a university by using integrated tasks. These changes are based on a decade of research to identify the best way to assess the communicative English skills needed in academic settings. The exam is intended to reflect more closely the speaking, listening, reading and writing skills required for success in these settings.

The first of the three-phase rollout will begin in October 2002, when the TOEFL program releases LanguEdge™ Courseware, a CD-ROM instructional tool that gives a glimpse of the next generation TOEFL. Instructors in English language classes can use LanguEdge Courseware to help their students build academic English skills needed at the university level.

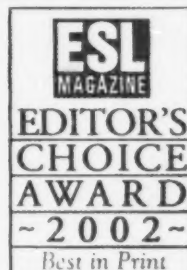
The second rollout phase is scheduled to begin in March 2003, when officials introduce the TOEFL Academic Speaking Test (TAST), which will be an unofficial, unproctored speaking test for students to practice their academic speaking skills. In

ESL Magazine Announces Editor's Choice Award Winners

In an effort to recognize excellence and innovation in English language teaching products, the editorial staff of *ESL Magazine* has created the *ESL Magazine* Editor's Choice Award. The award has three main categories: Best in Print (textbooks or a series of textbooks at the K-12, college/university or adult levels), Best in Software (at the K-12, college/university or adult levels) and Best in Web (websites for ESL students and teachers).

Criteria for evaluating products for the award include: 1) the product should help people learn English, 2) be pedagogically sound, 3) be easy to use, 4) have quality design, 5) be innovative, 6) be current.

The 2002 award recipients are: 1) Best in Print: *The Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas*, edited by Dorothy Kauffman and Gary Apple, Oxford University Press, New York, 2000. 2) Best in Software: iMovie2, produced by Apple Computer, 2001. 3) Best in Web. For teachers: The Purdue University Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/index.html>. For students: Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab <http://www.esl-lab.com/>. Go to <http://www.eslmag.com/awards.html> for further details and to submit nominations for the 2003 award.



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ETS has published framework papers (TOEFL Monographs 16-23) that explain the underlying theory and research behind the new communicative TOEFL test. These can be viewed at <http://www.toefl.org/research/rmonograph.html>.

Each year the TOEFL test is administered to approximately 800,000 candidates in more than 210 countries. More than 4,200 academic institutions, government agencies, scholarship programs and licensing/certification agencies in more than 80 countries use TOEFL scores. <http://www.toefl.org>.

New Videos on Sheltered Instruction

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE), the Center for Applied Linguistics, and the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) have produced two professional development videos on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)—a research-based model of sheltered instruction: 1) *The SIOP Model: Sheltered Instruction for Academic Achievement*, an 84-minute video, illustrates the eight SIOP Model components with classroom footage and teacher interviews. It is designed for staff development and teacher education. 2) *Helping English Learners Succeed: An Overview of the SIOP Model*, a 26-minute video, introduces sheltered instruction and the eight components of SIOP. For use by administrators, policy makers, teachers and teacher trainers. <http://www.cal.org/store/>.

Conference Calendar

September

- 19 21 **Southeast TESOL**
Regional conference, Atlanta, GA.
Contact Frances Wilson,
fwdivcon@yahoo.com.
- 19 21 **Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés (FAAPI)**, Córdoba, Argentina. Contact Elba Debat, faapi2002@hotmail.com.
- 20 22 **Panamá TESOL**, Panamá, Republic of Panamá. Contact Edith Espino, +507 263-8000 ext. 2106.
- 26 27 **First National Conference for Educators of Newcomer Students**, Washington, DC. Contact Beverly Boyson, newcomer@cal.org.
- 28 29 **Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)**, Tokyo, Japan. Contact jane@uls.ac.jp.

October

- 4 6 **IATEFL Hungary**, Veszpremi, Hungary. Contact Zoltan Poor, poorz@almos.vein.hu.
- 5 6 **Korea TESOL**, Seoul, Korea. Contact kotesol2002@yahoo.com.
- 5 6 **WATESOL**, Annandale, VA. Contact Karen Taylor, 301 405 5188.
- 11 13 **Current Trends in ELT**, Ankara, Turkey. Contact Beril Yucel, beril@baskent.edu.tr.
- 17 20 **MEXTESOL**, Monterrey, Mexico. Contact mextesol@mail.internet.com.mx.
- 18 19 **MITESOL**, Auburn Hills, MI. Contact Shari Weisbaum, 248-246-2568.
- 18 20 **Heritage Languages in America**, Tysons Corner, VA. Contact Scott McGinnis, 301 403-1750 x18.
- 31 1 **TESOL Euromed**, Edinburgh, Scotland. <http://www.himddali-scot.co.uk/tesoleuromed>.

November

- 2 3 **TESOL Macedonia-Thrace**, Thessaloniki, Greece. Contact tesolmth@compulink.gr.

- 7 9 **Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers and the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers**, Prince Edward Island, Canada. Contact casit@istar.ca.

- 8 9 **Ohio TESOL and Lau Resource Center**, Columbus, OH. Contact www.citl.ohio.edu/~otesol/conference/conference_f2002.htm.

- 8 9 **Colorado TESOL**, Longmont, CO. Contact Larry Fisher, 303 735-4234.

- 8 **Louisiana TESOL**, Baton Rouge, LA. Contact Brian and Susan Ary, 504 865 5803 or 504 280 7345.

- 8 **Oregon TESOL**, Salem, OR. Contact rkurzet@pcc.edu.

- 16 **Indiana TESOL**, Indianapolis, IN. Contact Ahmar Mahboob, 812 855-8012.

- 16 **NNETESOL**, Manchester, NH. Contact Rosemary Orlando, 603 668 2211.

- 21 23 **TESL Ontario**, Toronto, ON. Contact TESL Ontario, www.teslontario.org/.

- 22 23 **Puerto Rico TESOL**, San Juan, PR. Contact Naomi Vega Tneves, nvega@sagrado.edu.

- 22 23 **TESOL Italy**, Rome, Italy. Contact Paolo Coppani, tesol@usis.it.

December

- 13 15 **EGYPTESOL**, Cairo, Egypt. Contact Deena Boraie, dboraie@aucegypt.edu.

- 27 30 **Modern Language Association**, New York, NY. Contact MLA, 646 576 5263.

January 2003

- 6 10 **Hawaii International Conference on Education**, Honolulu, HI. Contact 808 947 7187.
- 22 24 **Costa Rica TESOL**, San Jose, Costa Rica. Contact Elieth Matamoros, elieth_m@hotmail.com.
- 23 25 **Thailand TESOL**, Bangkok, Thailand. Contact Suchada Nimmannit, nsuchada@chula.ac.th.

International Education Week

International Education Week (IEW), jointly sponsored by the U.S. Departments of State and Education, will take place November 18-22, 2002. IEW promotes the benefits of international education and exchange worldwide. This year, programs will emphasize the importance of increasing student knowledge and awareness of the world's cultures, peoples and languages. Events for the week include a nationwide poster contest for students of all ages (kindergarten through university level) and an international symposium in Washington, DC that will explore how women worldwide have used their education to create change in four areas: peace education and conflict resolution, literacy, education for individuals with disabilities, and governance. The IEW website (<http://exchanges.state.gov/iew/>) provides information about how to get involved and promotional materials that can be downloaded. It also includes a list events in various states as well as in France and Germany, a global IQ quiz, a library, and statements from President Bush, Secretary of State Powell and Secretary of Education Paige. One can also submit proposals for IEW events and join the IEW mailing list.

Updated *Helping Your Child* Series Available in Spanish

Helping Your Child, a 12-booklet series produced by the U.S. Department of Education for families and caregivers, has been updated and reissued. These booklets describe activities to promote learning and provide lists of relevant resources such as books, computer programs and websites. Titles of the series include *Helping Your Child Become a Reader*, *Helping Your Preschool Child*, *Helping Your Child With Homework*, *Helping Your Child Through Early Adolescence*, and *Helping Your Child Succeed in School*. Visit <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/hyc.html>.



Revised Online Directory of Teacher Preparation Programs

A newly revised National Directory of Teacher Preparation Programs (Preservice and Inservice) for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity is now available online. It provides information on teacher education programs designed to prepare teachers to instruct in linguistically and culturally diverse school settings. The directory was produced by researchers from CREDE and the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education at the School of Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder. View the directory and two others at http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/tools/online_directories.shtml.



Christine Meloni's
NETWORTHY

The Official Website of the United Nations

One of the composition topics for our placement test this fall at the George Washington University required students to evaluate the importance of the United Nations (UN). I was amazed when several students said they couldn't write on this topic because they had never heard of the UN. At first I thought it must be a linguistic misunderstanding, but I soon discovered that it was not. These students were unfamiliar with this world organization. I personally believe in the need for such an international organization, but not everyone feels this way. I think the UN is an important topic to discuss with our students who come from different countries and cultures. The official UN website is an excellent place to start.

The United Nations website (<http://www.un.org/>) is very attractive and very informative. It offers the ESL/EFL teacher at all educational levels an abundance of interesting materials. The home page provides a menu with numerous pages to access. Teachers would probably want to begin with the following pages that give background information: About the UN, Main Bodies, the Secretary-General, Member States, UN Millennium Development Goals, and The UN Works for Everyone: See How. Additional pages of interest include the Daily Briefing (the official UN spokesperson provides information about the Secretary-General's activities, decisions made by various UN bodies, and the schedule for the week ahead), Radio, TV and Photo (this multimedia center provides the latest news), Issues

on the UN Agenda, Documentation and Maps (this page contains documents from all of the bodies of the UN as well as maps), Publications, Stamps and Databases, and Conferences and Events.

The UN website's CyberSchoolBus is especially designed for teachers. This page includes activities for children such as interactive quizzes (e.g., Flag Tag and Water Quiz) and Ask an Ambassador, in which one of the UN ambassadors answers questions e-mailed by students. Another educational activity is Country-at-a-Glance in which students can choose a UN member state and view its statistics. Teaching materials are available each month on a specific topic. The topic for September 2002 was "Human Rights, Refugees and UNHCR" (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and the materials available included a teacher's guide, a brochure, a kit containing posters and articles to prompt class discussion, and teaching plans. If teachers and curriculum supervisors volunteer to review the content of the CyberSchoolBus page, they will receive free teaching materials. Volunteers are needed!

All pages on this official UN site are available in six languages: English, Spanish, French, Russian, Chinese and Arabic.

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She may be reached at cfmeloni@hotmail.com. Include "Networthy" as the subject.

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139

Steps to Success for Academic Readers

JEAN ZUKOWSKI/FAUST

The student approached me after class with her heavy textbook open and balanced in her hands. She had one finger on page 16 and another on page 28. "Am I supposed to read all of this? For Thursday's class?" she asked, her eyes growing larger with both fear and disbelief. Moon-Kyung was in her first "real" class, a transitional part of the intensive English program, and was shocked by the amount of reading required for a college freshman-level class. To the native-speaking and native-reading student, the assignment was a mere twelve pages. To her it was incon-

ceivable that she would have to work her way through so much.

"There is no way I can read so much," she explained. "But, there is," I assured her. And we sat down at the desk and in a few minutes I showed her how to do it. "You don't have to know every word. In fact you probably shouldn't even try to." Even that much was reassuring.

Then I talked with her about different kinds of reading—reading for pleasure or reading as an intellectual pursuit—and adjusting to the demands of academic reading. We teachers know from years of experience that nothing turns a good reader into one without direction and purpose more than a task that appears to be too great. Faced with an academic reading task, the average second language reader firmly grasps the bilingual dictionary and begins to plow through the material, one word and one sentence at a time. Such a reading style is antithetical to the whole reading task as it fragments the ideas and distracts (and discourages) the reader.

An Academic Reading Process Set a Purpose

My first suggestion to Moon-Kyung was to look at the topic for the day on the syllabus to find a purpose for the reading, to establish in her mind why she was reading those twelve pages and what she should be alert to find. I suggested that she also look at the progression of topics as listed in the syllabus so that the topic itself is placed in a context, a flow of ideas from beginning to end. Next she should write a sentence that summarizes in her own words why she is going to read this assignment: "I am reading this assignment to find out what...."

Determine the Scope of the Reading

I explained next that assessing the

length and scope of the reading puts a frame around the picture that ideas from the text would fill in: "Know how much you have to read, whether there are any clues such as graphics or section titles, and what the author has provided to help you understand the ideas in the text."

Next I suggested she read the first and last paragraphs of the reading assignment. I explained that then she should question whether the summary sentence that she wrote has been validated by what she has read. If not, she should probably revise her sentence to fit the main ideas of the first and last paragraphs. Separately, she could make a short list of the key words or key ideas in the reading. Such nouns are likely to appear several times in the first and last paragraphs and maybe also in the title of the reading, if there is one. Any of these repeated nouns that she didn't know she should look up. Every academic reader needs to be clear about what the topic is.

Fill in the Holes

Next I recommended reading and thinking about the first sentence of all the other paragraphs. With these sentences in mind, she should begin to understand both the structure and the pith of the reading. As she is new to this process, I recommended that she write down several nouns and at least one verb from the first and last paragraphs and then a few ideas from each of the in-between paragraphs. I assured her that as she became more familiar with the process she would have to do less writing. In any case, jotting down a few nouns was peanuts compared to the laborious process of interlinear translation (writing the meaning of the new words in the space between the lines) that had seemed her only way to read the assignment.

Recognize What You Know and Don't Know

I asked Moon-Kyung not to look up any words other than nouns and verbs in the first and last paragraphs. She could make a list or underline or highlight the words she didn't know, but she was not to look them up right away. I told her the story of my own discovery that it is possible to read without knowing every word. After

eight years of studying Turkish, I had to translate eight pages of a twelve-page story to pass a language proficiency test. I used my dictionary to get through the first eight pages, but I had still not understood the meaning of the story and time was running out. So I put the dictionary down and read past the words I didn't know to get to the end. And by so doing I made my first breakthrough in reading a foreign language. I was able to understand the gist without knowing every word. And she could achieve the same result too. The gist is the important part, not the individual words.

Integrate Your Ideas with the Reading

After figuring out whether she understood enough of the reading, Moon-Kyung was able to write down some of the ideas and add ideas of her own. I encouraged her to make the context of the reading as much her own integration of thoughts as the author's. "What do you already know about this topic?" I asked her. "And what has been added to what you already know?"

It turned out that Moon-Kyung already had some background knowledge that she had been discounting, mainly because of her insecurity as an academic reader. With a little encouragement, she was able to add a considerable amount to the sketchy outline she had composed.

Next I asked her to look for interesting tidbits: "Did you notice any numbers or people's names that might indicate special information?" Of course, she had. And then she skimmed over the reading to point them out to me (and to herself). I suggested that she look into the text around those names and extract a special detail or two from each of them. Then I suggested that she find some way to connect these ideas to the main idea of the

reading.

She smiled and said that these more personal parts were more interesting than the main topic. I pointed out that there was a good reason for that interest. These ideas were specific examples, reasons and expansions that relate to the topic and give it life. Her response was that these tidbits made the ideas of the reading much more appealing to her. In turn I pointed out that if she had been plodding and translating her way through the material, these interesting tidbits would have been overlooked. She would probably not have noticed that they were relevant to her experience and that they afforded opportunity to connect what she knew with what she was learning.

Determine the Author's Perspective

The next task in this academic reading was to determine the author's perspective. How did the author feel about the topic? Was it positive or negative? Furthermore, did Moon-Kyung agree with the author? Where were the clues to the author's attitude to be found? We looked for hints that the author had positive or negative feelings. Together we looked for synonyms for some of the verbs and tried them out in paraphrases. Did the meaning change? What slant did the author seem to have?

Think Critically

Examination of the text seemed to show that this author was neutral—that is, without feelings either in support of or in contradiction to the main idea. When I asked her how she felt about this neutrality, Moon-Kyung suggested to me that most academic writers probably tried to be neutral. So I then encouraged her to think critically about the main ideas. Did she agree with these concepts? If she had to say something against the main idea, what would or could she say? This

requirement actually helped her to realize that there were some areas of conflict between what she personally believed about the topic and what the author was saying. Saying that her teachers in high school had not liked their students to disagree with authority (the authority of teachers or the authority represented by the printed word), she needed assurance that such critical thought in academic circles in Western schools was prized, that she would earn respect for having the insights and courage to question the written word.

Connect Thoughts Back to the Original Purpose

I asked Moon-Kyung whether she felt that she had "read" the twelve pages. She said, "No." So I went about proving to her that she had gleaned the most important ideas. If reading means translating and collecting lists of new words, then she had not "read" her academic reading assignment, but if reading meant pulling out ideas, examining them and integrating them into her own thinking, then she had done the reading well.

To convince her, I asked her whether she was able to connect her summary statement to the concepts she had written down. She surprised herself by being able to do it. She was also pleased that she was able to transfer the main ideas of twelve pages into a short series of notes in her notebook. Convinced that she had "read" the twelve pages, she smiled and closed her book. "I can do that," she said, just like a graduate of our local high school.

Academic Reading from the View of the Teacher

Preparing students for academic reading entails helping them learn about setting a purpose, understanding the internal structure of the reading, integrating their

A Summary of Steps to Academic Reading Success

Set a Purpose

- Look at the topic and the progression of topics on the syllabus.
- Write a summary sentence stating the purpose of the reading assignment.

Determine the Scope of the Reading

- Look through the reading to determine how much you have to read.
- Look at graphics and section titles.
- Read the first and last paragraphs of the reading assignment.
- Question the summary sentence—has it been validated so far?
- List key words or ideas repeated in the titles and first and last paragraphs.

- Look up unknown words on the list.

Fill in the Holes

- Read and think about the first sentence of all the other paragraphs.
- Write down several nouns and at least one verb from the first and last paragraphs.
- Write down a few ideas from each of the in-between paragraphs.

Recognize What You Know and Don't Know

- Look up only the unknown nouns and verbs in the first and last paragraphs.

Integrate Your Ideas with the Reading

- Write down some of the ideas in the reading and add your own ideas.
- Look for interesting tidbits and connect them to the main idea.

Determine the Author's Perspective

- Determine the author's perspective—is it positive or negative?

Think Critically

- Agree or disagree with the author.

Connect Thoughts Back to the Original Purpose

- Connect the original summary statement to the concepts written down.

own background knowledge and opinions, and thinking critically about the topic. It also means helping a student strengthen the component skills of academic reading:

- determining enough of the meaning of a word from the immediate context to make sense of the use of the word,

- assessing the reading's relative difficulty, length and value by scanning the whole article and thereby being able to plan how long and how much effort the assigned reading will take,

- choosing a way to "read" the article that does not involve interlinear translation or heavy dependence on a bilingual dictionary,

- skimming over the surface of an article looking for statistical data, proper names, particular ideas,

- extrapolating the main ideas and identify the supporting concepts,

- determining an author's perspective and then disagreeing with that perspective or adding "and furthermore" statements to support it,

- combining the author's ideas with one's own to generate new ideas, and

- drawing conclusions.

Teaching reading as an academic skill is teaching a process of being critical about a tract rather than teaching the physical act of reading. If the act of reading means passing one's eyes over a sequence of words juxtaposed on page after page to comprehend each word as part of a set of ideas, then in a sense, academic reading isn't about the act of reading at all. However, if academic reading is choosing an approach to the text and interacting in a disciplined and deliberate manner, then academic reading is a thought progression that leads to the integrating of written ideas with one's own thinking.

Planning Academic Reading Lessons

What does this view of academic reading mean for a reading teacher? Planning for any reading class involves selecting materials that are appropriate in topic and interest, skill level and length for the students in a class. The teacher must also plan how to model the processes of reading without dependence on a dictionary and what the goals for the experience should be. There are three main ways that academic reading can be planned. Using all three for different kinds of academic reading lessons varies the approach and keeps the students interested.

Plan 1: Many academic reading assignments should follow a typical pattern of introducing, using and summarizing a topic: first students hear a brief lecture on a topic, then students indepen-

dently read a passage that relates to the lecture, and subsequently students reconvene to discuss and manipulate the ideas of the reading in light of the insights of the lecture. Good material for this kind of lesson might be a video clip of a lecture, one that students can see several times. A teacher might prepare listening guides with target vocabulary and target concepts so that students are mentally primed for the experience of the video.

Next, an academic reading assignment on the topic (or a closely related topic) leads the students through the learning and integration of ideas as part of the student interaction with text. Discussion with classmates about the ideas in the video and the text brings about greater internalization of the ideas and solidification of the vocabulary and implications of the arguments in the academic material.

In the sequence of Plan 1, the teacher's purpose is more focused on the students learning the process of preparing to read, reading and then applying the information of the reading than in learning the content of the reading. This process-orientation means a de-emphasis on the information in the video and the reading tract and an emphasis on the steps one follows in learning in an academic setting.

Plan 2: In such an educational setting in which the students need to learn content and as well as the process, their purpose for reading is established with questions to answer or information to seek as they read. Therefore, the students might have less need for teacher guidance in approaching the reading task. The content emphasis means tighter correlation with preceding lessons and subsequent lessons, as might be typical in an English for specific purpose (ESP) program. Students are concerned with learning about a topic so as to be able to do something with that knowledge and not just the exercise of learning skills.

Planning an ESP sequenced lesson often means adapting materials from a non-specialized text (not something written for the language learner). Thus vocabulary glosses, vocabulary in context exercises and exercises on inferencing and integrating ideas will be most helpful for the students.

Plan 3: If the reading material is too difficult for independent work, the teacher may have to guide the students through the passage one word, sentence or paragraph at a time in a class activity format—the lesson will be one of close reading. The teacher can set the material up for student success by making an outline of the material, preparing a sequential list of main ideas or key words, or

posing questions the answers to which will lead the students to understanding.

Sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, teacher and student should then work through the tract chosen for the lesson. It should be short, perhaps not more than 700 words for an hour-long class. Material selected for such close reading should be dense in ideas as well as vocabulary and new ideas. Furthermore, such close reading exercises should be presented as a coping strategy: students should not use close reading techniques unless they must read the section and they cannot get the gist without going through the pain of examining every word.

There is value in all three general approaches to academic reading; however, the teacher should realize that the line-by-line translation of Plan 3 is not really academic reading and seldom leads to ability to manipulate concepts and use the ideas of a reading passage.

Making a Difference in Students' Lives

What a wonderful experience it was to lift the burden from Moon-Kyung's shoulders as she faced her academic reading task. It continues to be a joy to me to help students like her who slave away with their dictionaries in an often futile attempt to understand academic texts. By teaching a relatively simple process for academic reading, ESL/EFL teachers can make a real difference in the lives of English language learners who are preparing for or already studying in academic settings.

Jean Zukowski/Faust, Professor of Applied Linguistics at Northern Arizona University and Director on the TESOL Board, has written many materials for English language learners in academic settings, including In Context, Between the Lines, Steps and Plateaus, Out of the Ordinary, and Across the Board, all published by Heinle and Heinle.

FOR FURTHER READING

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Connecting Theory and Practice in Technology Education

It is often difficult to connect theory and practice in technology education, especially in areas where contexts for practice are scarce. One solution is to use the case method. In considering how technology is and should be used, cases encourage teacher education students to consider the school, teacher, language learner goals, course content, learner motivation, principles of language learning, community input and many other issues. Not only do cases integrate theory and practice, but they also weave in subtexts that closely simulate those in authentic teaching contexts. In addition, cases, like the one below, can serve as professional development exercises.

Mila Stepanova's low-intermediate science/English class was participating in an e-mail project called "Mystery from Science" with EFL students in another school. In this activity, students in teams pose as a famous "mystery" character from science, conducting research and sending clues to their distant partners. Their e-mail partners use these clues and reference material from their library, texts, classmates and other resources to guess the name of the mystery scientist. The roles are then reversed. Mila had several goals for the students: 1) to be able to find information using a variety of resources including the World Wide Web; 2) to learn science content; 3) to interact with and write for an authentic audience in English; 4) to use e-mail to communicate; 5) to engage in collaborative problem solving, and 6) to develop an enjoyment of learning in English.

Mila encouraged her students to think critically and problem solve by asking them to explain how they figured out the answers to the clues their partners sent. Students were required to document their reasoning process, search strategies and sources. At the end of the project, Mila required each student to write a two-page reflection paper with important observations about the activity. Each student then chose one of the characters to investigate more fully and present to the class in English.

Although the science teacher at her school was supportive of this project, Mila's department chair received several calls from parents who questioned the time and effort spent on this activity. Although it was clear that students were motivated to learn both content and language through this activity, the parents voiced concern about whether English language students could provide good language models for each other and wondered whether both language and science knowledge would be gained more efficiently through some other means. The parents were also bothered that students' lab time was not spent using spelling and grammar software that the school had bought for this purpose. The department chair asked Mila

to bring her project materials and student performance indicators to a meeting with some of the parents so that they could discuss whether to continue this project. Mila prepared her argument carefully.

If you were Mila, what argument would you make to the department chair? To the parents? What kinds of materials would you want to show the participants in the discussion? Why? Answering these and other questions that this case raises can assist you, your students and your colleagues in voicing views on technology use, content and language integration, and language classroom goals. It may even begin dialogue that changes some of these views. (For more on case methods, read J. Kleinfield's article at <http://ericae.net/db/digs/ed321965.htm>.)

Joy Egbert teaches ESL and technology at Washington State University and can be reached at jegbert@wsu.edu.

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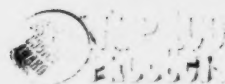
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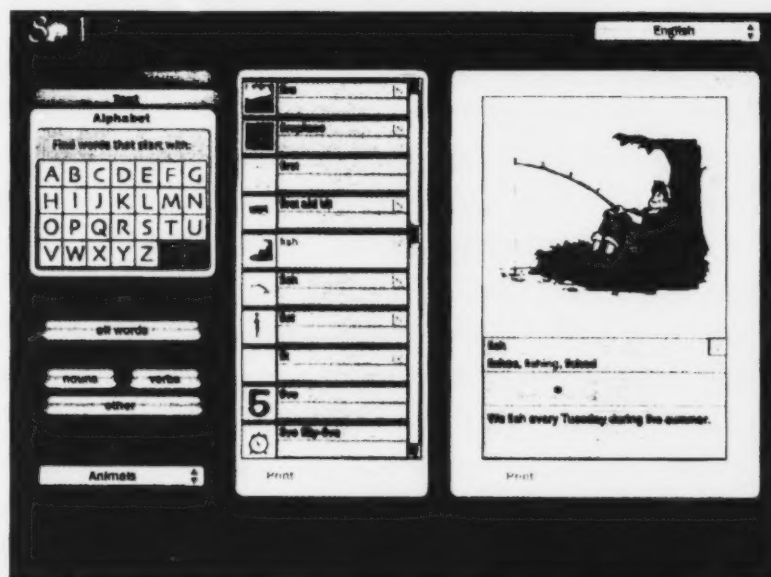
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Creating Cross-Cultural Connections

BY SHELLEY FAIRBAIRN

Kadja podoh na Benbasu...As the words of a Bosnian folk song filled the auditorium, cheers erupted and tears flowed from international audience members in response to the musical welcome. So began two collaborative concerts between local schools and their community designed to build cross-cultural understanding in a Des Moines suburb with a growing immigrant population. Embracing our nation's newcomers through educational initiatives such as these provides a wonderful opportunity for community members to come together in meaningful exchanges that produce lasting appreciation of the diversity that makes our nation strong.

The Initial Spark

The initial spark for this project was struck at a local conference when I, the community's middle school ESL teacher, met the director of the Des Moines Diversity Chorus, Elsie Naylor. With a background in music education, I was drawn to the Chorus, recognizing the potential for collaboration that would foster international understanding. I then asked the sixth grade choral director of the middle school, Lois Peterson, to join in the creation of the event, knowing that involving more students would mean a larger audience and greater possibilities for sharing the message of the event.

The two choral directors and I met in the summer to begin planning an event that would highlight the community's diversity and give participants the opportunity to expand their understanding of various cultures. As we discussed and refined our goals, the event began to take shape. It would begin with a concert entitled "Peace Will Come," showcasing global music and dramatic readings. The evening would end with a reception featuring international food, dance, and displays and would provide the audience with the opportunity to interact and

make connections with the performers.

Planning the Event

The first step in planning the event was to select a date. It was essential to find a day when both the auditorium and the performers would be available. Other school events (parent-teacher conferences, school board meetings, etc.) were taken into account to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Next, each of us set about developing different parts of the program: the Diversity Chorus director selected music

from a local Jewish temple to perform original solo compositions and to lead the combined choirs in a final number. In addition, she finalized the musical program for the evening.

The sixth grade choral director fine-tuned her chorus's individual piece, "I Am a Small Part of the World" (www.alfred.com) and the combined choir numbers. In addition, she communicated with her students' parents about the project and took care of the details related to sound and lighting in the auditorium.

I collaborated with the district's high school ESL teacher and a bilingual ESL paraprofessional in coordinating the readings and reception, with the goal of getting ESL students involved in the event. One reading consisted of a touching poem entitled "My Homeland" written by a Bosnian student several years earlier (see sidebar). The other was an award-winning essay about a student's experience saving a friend from a soldier's gunfire in war-torn Bosnia. These two students also became members of the Diversity Chorus and taught the group the pronunciation of the Bosnian lyrics. Another ESL student, a Ukrainian twelfth grader, agreed to perform a classical piano selection at the concert.

I planned for the reception to consist of a variety of cultural displays created by the entire K-12 ESL program in the local schools.

Cultural artifacts, posters, artwork, dancing, and even a cooking demonstration would entertain concert-goers as they sampled Asian and Bosnian delicacies provided by local businesses and served by ESL students and staff.

Advertising was a key aspect of planning for the occasion. We contacted local newspapers and they graciously promoted and reported on the event. In addition, a Diversity Chorus member created a full-color poster featuring an ESL student's drawing of the globe sur-



ESL students demonstrate Bosnian pastry making as part of a school-community diversity event.

for her group and the combined choirs, the middle school choral director focused on music for her sixth grade chorus, and I arranged the readings and the reception. The fact that the sixth grade choral director and I became members of the Chorus and thus attended their weekly rehearsals helped us to maintain strong communication throughout the preparation for the event.

The Diversity Chorus director gathered a variety of music that reflected the theme of peace and invited a guest artist

rounded by a banner proclaiming "peace" in many languages.

The Big Event

Hours before the concert began, ESL staff members and students were busy decorating the reception area, preparing the food service areas, and picking up the food samples from local businesses. The choirs assembled approximately an hour before the concert to warm up and prepare to share their message of peace.

With the combined choruses on stage, the evening began with a rendition of "Peace Will Come" by Tom Paxton. The sixth grade singers then shared their individual piece and the Diversity Chorus returned to the stage to share several African pieces: a lullaby and two selections with themes of strength and freedom, incorporating several languages into the program.

The next section of the concert focused on Bosnia, the country most represented by the immigrants in the community. Well-known folk songs brought cheers from the audience, while student readings helped the American-born concert-goers understand the experiences and feelings of the refugees. One of the district's Bosnian ESL paraprofessionals was also recognized for her service to the community during this portion of the concert. Following that special presentation, the masterful piano playing of the Ukrainian student echoed the sentiment that music is a language that transcends national boundaries.

The Jewish guest soloist shared thought-provoking original songs and performed a piece with the Diversity Chorus. She then led the combined choruses in the evening's final musical selection: her own arrangement of a Hebrew song entitled "Od Yavo." Its lyrics clearly summarized the vision of the event: "Peace will yet come to us and to everyone. Peace to us and to the whole world, peace, peace."

Donations were gratefully accepted at the conclusion of the concert. The money was divided among the two choruses and the ESL program.

The reception was well-attended and the international foods disappeared as an appreciative audience experienced the flavors of several nations, even learning from two ESL students how to make a Bosnian pastry. Plenty of conversation flowed as the onlookers viewed the cultural displays and watched students perform the Bosnian folk dance called "kolo," with at least one concert-goer joining the students in a round!

Organizing a Diversity Event

Use this outline to plan an international concert, an in-school "diversity conference," or any celebration of diversity you want!

I. Six months to one year before the event:

- Survey school staff and the community regarding interest in and support of a diversity event.
- Obtain permission to have the event.
- Create an event planning committee.
- Determine the scope of the event.
- Talk to your administrator and parent/teacher organization about funding.
- Contact other funding sources (arts councils/boards, businesses, etc.).
- Choose a date.
- Reserve the event site taking into account rehearsal and/or set-up time.
- Divide preparatory tasks among committee members.
- Schedule meetings, rehearsals, etc.

II. Three to six months before the event:

- Create a contact letter for performers/presenters.
- Create an information sheet for committee members to use in documenting contacts with potential performers/presenters.
- Make contacts and confirm performers/presenters.
- Obtain permission to photograph planning activities and the event, so you can use them for future publication.
- Begin planning reception.

III. One to three months before the event:

- Organize/schedule performances/presentations.
- Plan decorations for performance/presentation locations (if applicable).
- Create sign-up sheets (for a diversity conference wherein students can choose sessions to attend—these can tell presenters how many people will attend each session and can be used to take attendance).
- Compile information from sign-up sheets.
- Confirm performances/presentations in writing.
- Share needs for special equipment, room arrangements, lighting, seating, etc. with appropriate individuals.
- Organize a team of greeters for the day of the event.
- Find someone to do announcements during the event indicating when to proceed to the next session (for a diversity conference).
- Organize a back-up plan in case of last-minute cancellations.
- Continually update school staff on activities of the committee.
- Begin to finalize reception details.

IV. Four weeks before the event:

- Begin to finalize the event program or schedule and plan for the printing of necessary copies.

- Meet with teaching staff to explain the details of the event.
- Contact the media.
- Obtain decorations for performance/presentation locations.
- Finalize reception details.
- Organize a welcome table with name tags, a sign-in sheet, etc.
- Compile lists of individuals signed up for each session to use in taking attendance (if necessary).
- Make posters advertising the event.
- Finalize back-up plan in case of last-minute cancellations.

V. Two weeks before the event:

- Hang up posters/murals.
- Prepare staff/student reflection sheets (to be completed the day of the event).
- Prepare staff/community surveys about interest in repeating the event.
- Make name tags.
- Communicate any special parking arrangements to staff (to make room for performers or presenters).
- Contact the media again.
- Remind appropriate individuals of any needs for special equipment, room arrangements, lighting, seating, etc.
- Ensure that event programs or schedules will be ready for distribution.

VI. The day before the event:

- Contact the media again.
- Remind appropriate individuals of any needs for special equipment, room arrangements, lighting, seating, etc.
- Distribute staff/student reflection sheets (or this can be done immediately following the event).
- Distribute attendance sheets (if applicable).
- Remind P.A. announcer of specific duties on the day of the event.
- Ensure that event programs or schedules are ready for distribution.

VII. The day of the event:

- Decorate the performance/presentation locations (if applicable).
- Set up reception area.
- Set up welcome table.
- Ensure that greeters are in position.
- Oversee announcements (if applicable).
- Address any cancellations.
- Take plenty of pictures.

VIII. After the event:

- Clean up the performance/presentation and reception areas.
- Have students and staff complete reflection sheets.
- Thank staff.
- Survey staff/community about interest in repeating the event in the future.
- Send thank you letters, evaluation sheets, and sign-up sheets for future events (if applicable) to all performers/presenters and volunteers.
- Meet with committee members and administrators for debriefing.

Reflecting on the Event

The many positive comments from concert attendees confirmed that we achieved our goals for the evening: to bring the community together and to celebrate peace. It was amazing to hear of the occasion's effects on the audience. The sixth grade choral director remarked, "The message of the event had a powerful emotional impact on parents and teachers attending. Most of the parents attending thought they were going to just another children's school concert. Instead they heard firsthand accounts from children in our district who had experienced the horror of war and heard music that combined children's and adults' voices in a plea for unity and peace."

A concert-goer from Bosnia shared that she was surprised and excited to hear music sung in her native language. She remarked that it was a "very important day" for local residents from Bosnia. With a smile, she summed up the evening by stating, "My heart was full."

One of the ESL students who sang with the Diversity Chorus emphasized the unifying effects of music in saying, "Music is the same in every language. When you sing it, you don't feel different; you just blend in."

The Diversity Chorus director commented, "The sharing of ethnic music between young people and members of the Chorus is an innovative way to build the bridges of tolerance and appreciation in the community. The program was well received by school administrators, parents, and the general public."

This positive reception by the community prompted a second event during the following semester. That concert included even more guest soloists as well as a multi-lingual evaluation form. The form fulfilled the requirements of grants calling for program evaluation in a manner that was easily accessible to the speakers of other languages in the audience. The inclusion of several languages on the form further served to remind the native speakers of English in the audience that fully embracing diversity involves making participation in every aspect of life feasible for non-native speakers of English.

The evaluation form asked concert-goers to identify their country of origin, to tell a bit about themselves (whether they were parents, educators, musicians, and/or persons interested in supporting diversity events), and to respond to a few open-ended items:

- Did the program meet your

"My Homeland"

by Merima Catic

To live in America
I am really scared
even if I know
that I am safe there.

I have lived in America
about a year
and I always think
about my homeland.

I wish I could go there
just to say "Hi"
and if there was no war
my uncle wouldn't die.

Please, God, stop the war
so I can go back
to my own home.

expectations?

- What did you like best?
- Suggestions for future programs/performers.

The evaluation form also gave individuals the opportunity to request that they be notified of future events, to indicate interest in joining the Chorus, and/or to volunteer to assist the Chorus in other ways.

Replicating this Event

People working in the field of ESL education usually know others with a strong vision for building bridges between newcomers and their American-born counterparts. Creating an event such as ours is not difficult if you build a team of committed, hard-working individuals with a shared vision. Remember to involve both local and international community members from the very beginning.

Once you visualize the idea for your event, be sure to allow enough time to prepare. Funding is, of course, a critical aspect of making the event happen. Remember that many organizations and companies offer grant money for just such events. Also, be sure to check with local businesses for donations of food, paper goods, printing, and other needed items. This can take time, so planning far in advance will serve you well.

A special consideration when planning a reception is how food must be served, depending on the types of food and the venue. Some schools have stringent requirements regarding how food is to be prepared and served, so if you're planning to have the event at a school, remember to check into those details.

Publicity is an additional key aspect of having an event of this nature. Local

newspapers and radio and TV stations may be willing to provide promotion or coverage of the event—just ask!

If music is to be an integral part of your event, networking is one of the best ways to obtain it. Some of the music performed in our events was brought directly from Bosnia by a school staff member. Sometimes, rote learning of folk songs is the only method of mastering them; don't be afraid to try it. You might even get the audience involved! Singing in other languages is well within the realm of possibility and can be an opportunity to involve international members of the community in your event—ESL students played a valuable role in teaching the pronunciation of the Bosnian pieces performed in the concert described above.

No Longer Strangers

The international concerts described here were the result of the vision and hard work of many dedicated individuals. The value of such events was underscored by an immigrant concert-goer who remarked that hearing music in her own language made her feel that she was no longer a stranger in her new homeland. As you work to create your own diversity event, whether big or small, you will see that, indeed, "Peace Will Come."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to Elsie Naylor, Lois Peterson, Stephancy Jones-Vo, and Dijana Tiric-Cohodarevic for their work on the "Peace Will Come" event.

Shelley Fairbairn has taught ESL for eleven years in many settings in Indonesia, Singapore and the United States. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Foreign Language and ESL Education at The University of Iowa.

ESL Magazine's Online Poll

What art form do you use
most in teaching ESL/EFL?

- 16% music
- 36% photos/drawings
- 23% videos/movies
- 6% poetry
- 2% dance
- 10% drama
- 8% other

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At a Loss to Describe "At"

Dear Grammar Guy:

A student of mine recently told me about a new girlfriend of his. He said he'd met her *in* a party. I corrected him and said he should say *at* a party. Then, of course, the worst scenario happened: he asked me why! I'm really pretty stumped. Could you please explain this? Thanks!

—Trish Sarkisian, Oklahoma City, OK

Dear Trish:

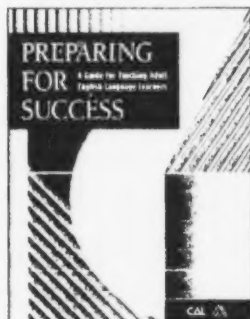
In my latest book, *The ELT Grammar Book: A Teacher-Friendly Reference Guide* (Alta Book Center), I devote a whole section in the chapter on prepositions to *at*, which I call the "bane of all the prepositions." *At* serves many very useful purposes in English, and here we have a great example. The preposition *in* is used to describe something that is enclosed in one way or another (*in* a house, *in* a room). *At* means "in the general area" rather than "enclosed." We say *at* a party because a party is not a specific place; it's wherever people are gathered to have fun. That's why we need to use this more generalized preposition. You could say *at* a party *in* my friend's apartment. Typical sentences I give students as good examples are "We all met *in* Terminal B *at* the airport" and "We're *in* Room 302 *in* Cutler Hall *at* the university." I hope this helps.

Here's the "Food for Thought" question from the last issue: What's the difference between the verbs *lie* and *lay*, and why do most English speakers confuse them? (Of course, I'm not thinking

of *lie* meaning "not tell the truth.") I'd like to thank everybody who sent in their answers, but most especially Linda Conan of Portland, Oregon for sending me this splendid answer right away. Linda says, "*Lie* is an intransitive verb, which means it can't take a direct object. Therefore, it deals only with the action of the subject (They're *lying* on the bed, watching TV). *Lay*, on the other hand, is a transitive verb, which means it must have a direct object (They're *laying* their clothes on the bed before they pack them into their suitcases). The reason English speakers confuse the two verbs is because the past of *lie* is the irregular *lay* (They *lay* on the bed, watching TV). If I may add this, the way things are going, I wouldn't be surprised if *lie* disappears altogether with this meaning and *lay* becomes acceptable for both the transitive and intransitive uses." I couldn't agree with you more, Linda! But that follows the natural evolution of all languages.

And here's the "Food for Thought" question for this issue. Please send in your answers as soon as possible. I'd love to hear from you! ESOL teachers go by fairly strict rules covering countable and uncountable nouns (*pen* vs. *ink*). Yet there are certain groups of nouns that seem to break these rules. Can you identify some of them and explain why you think they've crossed the line?

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida.



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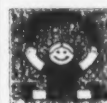
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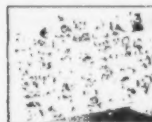
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Applied Linguistics to Enhance ESL/EFL Education

BY FRANCISCO GOMES DE MATOS

The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics
 Edited by Robert B. Kaplan
 Oxford University Press, 2002

In this age of ever-increasing interdisciplinarity and in-depth professionalization, ESL educators are experiencing greater cross-cultural, linguistic, pedagogical and psychological demands. As a result *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (OHAL) is a welcome volume. It is "a comprehensive overview of the field of applied linguistics at the beginning of the third millennium" (p. X).

Applied linguists can do many things, as this book will show, but how relevant can applied linguistic knowledge be to ESL educators? Although the answer will vary individually, much can be expected of the integration of applied linguistic knowledge into what ESL teachers should be able to know and to do, especially if we consider that among the sets of problems addressed by applied linguists, one has to do with "language teaching problems" (resources, training, practice, interaction, understanding, use, inequalities, motivations, outcomes) as categorized by William Grabe in the first chapter. Of the 43 contributors, nearly half are involved in ESL.

Topics and issues included in the Handbook are research approaches in applied linguistics, the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, discourse analysis, the study of second language learning (the longest part of the book), the study of second language teaching, variation in language use and language performance, bilingualism and the individual learner, multilingualism in society, language policy and planning, translation and interpretation, language assessment and program evaluation, and technological applications in applied linguistics.

ESL teacher educators (I have been one for 40 years) will find much of theoretical and applicational relevance, either by reading every chapter or by probing selected chapters that have closer affinity to the ESL classroom. Another reading strategy I recommend is to look at the many useful lists found throughout the book: 11 problems addressed by applied linguists, 15 cognitive attributes underlying test items, ten implications for second language reading instruction, three qualities and four organizational features of communicative classrooms, five contextual and pedagogical features shared by content-based instruction, eight advantages of bilingual education, three lessons of international relevance concerning bilingual education in California, five types of motivational orientation, three factors characterizing bilingual speakers, five principles of contact linguistics, four reasons for the dearth of studies on language spread, a summary of 12 study methodologies used in language policy and planning, eight issues to receive attention by language planning and policy researchers, six qualities of appropriate computer-assisted language learning, and seven features for discussing applied linguistics as an interdisciplinary field.

For ESL educators with a minimal background in applied linguistics and its mediating role for teaching and learning, there is much to be gained in chapters on identity and language learn-

ing (Norton and Toohey), a social psychological perspective on second language acquisition (Gardner), second language acquisition from an interactionist perspective (Gass), pragmatics and second language acquisition (Bardovi-Harlig), the political and professional decisions in curriculum development (Medgyes and Nikolov), communicative, task-based, and content-based language instruction (Bingham Wesche and Skehan), and bilingual education (Baker).

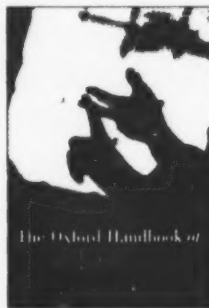
For a masterful synthesis of factors influencing variation in language learning, Oxford's chapter is especially recommended. If you are technologically-minded, Chapelle's clear account of empirical computer-assisted language learning research (process and product-oriented research) is another must. Almost prophetically she states, "the topic of computer-assisted language learning makes an ideal closing chapter for the OHAL because it is likely to be the vehicle by which many of the concepts and findings in other aspects of applied linguistics will be explored and developed in the twenty-first century" (p. 505). She realistically adds, "CALL activities must be constantly updated on the basis of developments in theory and research in language teaching" (p. 505).

The 20-page reference list deserves careful, close reading since therein lies a fairly up-to-date body of highly informative data (there are some 2001 entries). The list includes other related handbooks and encyclopedias. The journals included could have been listed separately, but limitations of space prevented Kaplan from doing so.

In a monumental editorial enterprise like this, gaps are unavoidable, as Kaplan tells us, particularly in the important areas of "work with the deaf, with teacher education, and with corpus development—papers which unfortunately were never delivered" (pp. 5-6). I would like to have seen a chapter on the rather parallel, sometimes overlapping histories of applied linguistics and ESL/EFL education (applied linguistics can be said to have started through the work of applied linguists at the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan in the early 1940s), as well as a more explicit recognition of learners' rights (but cf. mention of student rights on p. 7). Although the geographical distribution of contributors reflects some diversity (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Hungary, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States), voices representing Asia, Africa and Latin America are conspicuously absent.

Despite such omissions, this Handbook should be judged on what it can contribute to enhancing the applied linguistic knowledge of ESL educators: in this respect, it is to be commended and used widely and wisely. May the paths of applied linguistics and English language education keep crossing, so that the job of teaching English as a second language becomes a deeply humanizing, peace-promoting experience.

Francisco Gomes de Matos teaches at the Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil. He is currently president of the Board of Trustees, Associação Brasil-América, a local Binational Center. His e-mail is fcgm@cashnet.com.br.



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Combining ESL and Job Training

BY STEPHANEY JONES-VO

In recent years, some Iowa companies have been experiencing a distressing shortage of qualified job applicants. As a result, these companies have explored new ways of marketing themselves as desirable employers to non-traditional workers. It was this premise that led me to use my experience as an ESL teacher and offer my first industry-specific ESL course for housekeepers and janitors at the Marriott Corporation in 1997. Since then, I have authored and offered several additional courses through DecZee Manufacturing and a five-month intensive daily course through Ramark Industries. Both manufacturing companies employ refugees with limited English who use welding skills on the job. These companies are leading the way in Iowa and setting an example for companies nationwide by providing dual instruction in both English and job skills to otherwise unemployable workers, thereby creating a "win-win" situation for their employees as well as their own companies.

Bleak Socioeconomic Conditions

Several socioeconomic factors brought about these innovative corporate educational initiatives. Despite an increasing population, Iowa's workforce is in danger of not meeting the state's growing economic demands. The fastest growing segment of Iowa's population is senior citizens over the age of 100, according to Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack. The celebrated "graying of Iowa" is diminishing the workforce.

At the same time, Iowa hosts a large population of recent refugees and immigrants. Beginning in 1975 when Iowa Governor Robert D. Ray led the country in resettling Southeast Asian refugees, the state today continues to resettle refugees from Bosnia, Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Pakistan. Yet despite these increasing numbers, Iowa's employers have been struggling to fill existing positions. This lack of qualified workers could have a chilling effect on the state's economic growth, if not for

some creative hiring and retention strategies recently adopted by some of the state's top employers, the Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services, and inventive ESL teachers.

Why Offer Job Training and English Classes?

Executive Officer of the Bureau of Refugee Services, MaryAnn Vedder, explained how her agency, the only state funded agency of its kind in the United States, sought not only to improve job

time, effort and money spent. One of our employers specializing in welding, Ramark Industries, had previously received no responses to job postings seeking skilled welders. Using a creative, if not desperate, strategy, Ramark officials combined industry-specific English training while simultaneously providing on-the-job welding training in an intensive, daily program over the course of five months. As a result of this unusual willingness to meet the needs of the hard-working, but non-English speaking and unskilled potential workers, Ramark was able to physically expand the company into Des Moines, buy an existing vacant building, and increase their workforce by 15 workers."

Aiming to meet the needs of employers and to expand the state's economy, the Bureau has partnered with select businesses to provide funding for English and job training classes. Two instructors were hired to teach at Ramark Industries. I was hired as the ESL teacher to conduct a welding-specific class highlighting terms, equipment, accurate measurement, print reading, etc. A professional welding instructor was hired to complement the daily ESL classes with hands-on welding demonstrations and course-work throughout the day designed to prepare students for a welding certification exam. The welding instructor and I collaborated to reinforce each other's content. Ramark provided an on-site classroom with acrylic board and materials for the students.

A number of factors contributed to the success of this dual class. Most importantly, the participants were willing and the management was supportive. In addition, we accommodated the welders' schedules by starting classes at 5:30 a.m. rather than at the end of the work day. This allowed parents of young children to provide afternoon childcare while their spouses worked a different shift. Furthermore, humor and an accepting environment in the classes proved critical to the participation and success of all stu-

placement for her clients, but also to contribute to an economic boon for employers.

"After meeting with over 75 employers of our refugee clients, we understood their number one issue was the employees' lack of English skills, especially ones that related to the workplace. Realizing the importance of listening to our employers, the Bureau decided to fund some industry/workplace ESL classes. These classes have proven to be well worth the



dents. The class was embedded into the normal work hours so that workers were actually paid for time spent in training. This incentive inspired excellent attendance and individual participation. In five months of daily classes, participants' overall absence rate was lower than 1%.

Having succeeded in getting the new plant running and generating income with a workforce of resettled refugees, Ramark Industries received the Governor's Volunteer Award for its service to the state of Iowa in 2001. The Ramark example demonstrates that creative thinking and investing in people can surmount seemingly impossible human resource obstacles. It also opens the doors for ESL teachers to seize similar opportunities.

Other Companies Benefit from the Dual Class Model

Cindee Moyer, Director of Human Resources at DeeZee Manufacturing, a growing firm that produces truck parts for Ford and Nissan, also credits the dual class model (combining job skills with English instruction) with providing benefits to both the employer and employees. She notes, "We implemented ESL training within the first few months of hiring 30 Bosnian refugees in 1997. We developed concerns that they might not understand product terminology, safety issues, benefits and personnel evaluation.

"We decided to incorporate 'DeeZee specific' training into the ESL classes that we were offering our employees. Each employee voluntarily signs up to attend twelve two-hour sessions. He or she must pass both a written and an oral examination to be eligible for a \$250 bonus from DeeZee. We offer back-to-back sessions of beginning and intermediate classes (each class allows 20 advance registrants) and have had excellent success with employee participation.

"We feel it has been an important step in developing good employee relations. The employees seem excited about attending the classes and our supervisors see the benefit of their attendance. Today we employ over 250 refugees. They have become a vital part of our workforce and the ESL classes are an important part of its success."

Moyer also praises the work ethic, attendance record and longevity with the company exhibited by these new hires. She credits them in part with the record-breaking production that DeeZee has experienced this year. She also points out that some workers are requesting a third level of instruction to improve their English even more.

It should be noted that the attendance bonus provided by DeeZee is certainly an additional motivator for students to pursue the ESL training. DeeZee also provides a signed certificate for each successful candidate as well as refreshments upon com-

pletion of the final oral and written assessments at the last class in a series. The tangible support and encouragement of employees by DeeZee management contributes greatly to a positive work climate. While the ESL class retention rate varied from 50%-100%, the variation could be at least partially explained by a heightened demand for employees working overtime to meet increased production needs. Overtime hours occasionally conflicted with the ESL class time of 5-7 p.m., but employees were not penalized for those absences.

DeeZee employee Husein Cikotic remarks, "I have finished second level of ESL classes at my company...Before taking ESL classes I could not talk to other people because I couldn't speak English...Now I can contact with other people because I have learned to speak English. All together I had 48 hours of ESL classes. Those classes have helped me a lot with my English, but I think that I need more classes."

Elements of a Successful Dual Program

Providing meaningful instruction that empowers immigrants and refugees to contribute to their communities and their own success requires content germane to their performance. One way to discover corporate goals and to solicit input from all concerned is to organize a meeting including managers and supervisors. They must be clear in their expectations of the ESL instructor and the industry-specific classes. Defined benchmarks must be established so that student progress can be observed, documented and assessed. Incentives such as an attendance bonuses, completion certificates, a company outing or celebration of achievement, and attendance requirements must be agreed upon. Registration must be organized. Each company may express different needs.

For example, Marriott Corporation desired that their staff demonstrate how to be helpful and friendly to hotel guests, follow directions, and improve their job-related English. Attendance of the year-long, on-site Marriott course was voluntary. Marriott generously provided refreshments for the participants, as well as texts, notebooks and pens, family tickets to an ice show, tickets to a local amusement park and football games, and a celebration with pizza and bowling at the end of the course. These features, as well as humor and an accepting classroom environment provided by the instructor, were critical to a high retention rate. Students were motivated to attend and extremely appreciative of the opportunity but did not receive additional pay.

Teaching strategies in the Marriott classes included role playing to simulate guest interactions, vocabulary expansion to include hotel and job specific terminol-

Pertinent Texts to Consider

Choosing a useful and appropriate text is key to achieving the maximum benefit from the dual classes. Some suggestions for starters:

Put English to Work by Janet Podnecky, Contemporary Books, Levels I-VI.

Everyday English by Barbara Zaffran, National Textbook Company, Levels I-IV.

Practical English by Tim Harris, Harcourt Brace and Company, Levels I-III.

Industry-Specific Teaching Tools

There are a variety of industry-specific teaching tools that can be used:

► **Large laminated digital photos** of work stations and machines to be used like flash cards

► **Samples of products** collected from supervisors for identification of parts, materials, color, etc. (for example, running board, tube, aluminum, steel, galvanized steel, Ford gray, Nissan silver, tread, scratch, dent, etc.)

► **Small industry-specific flash cards** suitable for independent or group study, with a graphic on one side and the definition on the other, such as claim form, human resources, safety glasses, lifting technique, MSDS sheets, sick leave, attendance bonus, etc.

► **Samples of company-specific forms** or product tags

► **Clear plastic rulers and protractors** (enough for each student) for use with overhead projector instruction on accurate measurement

► **Enough overhead transparencies and acrylic marking pens** for students to use during in-class assignments (This saves valuable time writing at the board and gives all students an opportunity for teacher input. In addition, all students participate and learn from each other's mistakes.)

► **A list of the U.S. citizenship questions and answers** for each student (www.thecenterweb.org/adult/citizenship/100questions.htm)

ogy, pronunciation practice and general ESL instruction to improve reading, writing, listening and speaking. Relevant realia such as cleaning equipment was brought in and supervisory staff were frequently consulted to make certain that pertinent topics were being included.

The Future of Industry-specific English and Job Training Education

Given the inadequate size of the workforce in Iowa at a time when many companies are looking to expand globally, common sense demands that we educate our unskilled and non-English speaking refugees. They often bring with them a strong work ethic, a desire to rebuild their homes and families, a drive to put down roots, and pride in their performance. In the past, it is the determination and grit of such hard workers that have made America strong. These willing students are grateful for the opportunity to learn English in the context of their jobs and such gratitude translates to loyalty and performance. Despite fatigue, multiple jobs and family responsibilities, the exemplary attendance at these classes indicates the high priority accorded them by students.

The dual English/job skills courses present a perfect opportunity to incorporate civics and citizenship information into the classes since many of the participants will seek United States citizenship.

Tax Tip for Instructors

ESL Instructors may want to consider the way in which they will be hired; for example, as a private contractor or as an employee of the company itself. As a contractor, certain tax rules apply and you will need to report that income when you report your taxes. Some tax preparers charge extra to report self-employed income on a tax return. In addition, no social security, federal or state taxes, etc., will be deducted from the paychecks of contractors. You will be expected to take care of when you file your annual taxes. As a contractor, it is wise to set aside 30% or so of any check to cover future taxes that you will have to pay on that income. Some companies are amenable to hiring you on their payroll and delivering your salary, after taxes and deductions, on the same timetable as other employees. Make sure to ask if this is possible.

The ESL teacher can help make a profound difference in the quality of life for these students by empowering them to understand, knowledgeably participate in, and appreciate their new government. Students are hungry for information on how their democracy functions. Supervisors may wish to include instruction about company policy, sexual harassment, personal hygiene, or a host of other individualized topics. There is no limit to what the ESL teacher can create in these classes; the eager students will guide the way by revealing what they need to know.

ESL teachers are in an enviable position to create, shape, and present the keys that unlock many aspects of successful, fulfilling, and rewarding futures for refugees in their new homeland. These

students, in turn, contribute to the economic well-being of the companies that hire them. By bridging the gap between newcomers and productive employment, ESL teachers can play an increasingly pivotal role in strengthening our nation's economy.

Stephaney Jones-Vo is project director of two federal grant programs in Des Moines Public Schools to improve literacy in elementary ESL students. She is a former K-12 ESL teacher. Active in refugee resettlement, she has also taught in the Intensive English Program at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and currently serves as a consultant and teacher to corporations implementing English instruction and job training.

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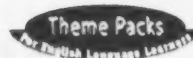
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English Teaching in Taiwan

BY JOHANNA KATCHEN

The island nation of Taiwan lies southeast of China and has a population of over 21 million people. The official language is Mandarin and several dialects are spoken. Until the end of World War II Japanese was the most prevalent foreign language in Taiwan, which was under Japanese control. With the coming of the United States army and continued U.S. presence throughout the 1970s, American English became the most popular foreign language (with Japanese now a distant second).

The thirst for English in Taiwan appears to be unquenchable. University students need English to attend graduate school abroad. Secretaries, engineers and teachers, among others, take English classes in the evenings, often after a full day at work. A recent newspaper article reported that taxi drivers in Taipei were receiving three-week English courses to improve their service to foreign customers. It seems that people in Taiwan from all walks of life find English useful, if not indispensable.

English in Primary and Secondary Schools

For some time, English has been taught in all junior and senior high schools, starting with the first year of junior high school. Since September of 2001, English instruction has begun in all schools by at least the fifth grade of primary school, and there are plans to bring that starting point down to the third grade for all schools within a few years. English is the only foreign language required to be taught in all schools.

The overwhelming majority of primary and secondary schools are government schools (national, county, city). Of the few private schools, many are run by religious organizations or cater to children of expatriates (for example, the Taipei American School, which uses an American style curriculum) although children of local Chinese are also enrolled. Children in these schools are most likely preparing for tertiary education outside Taiwan, since students planning to pursue tertiary education within Taiwan must closely follow the syllabus of the government schools in order to pass the university entrance exams.

Although English education now officially begins in the fifth grade, many parents send their children to private lessons before then and may even enroll them in English-only or bilingual kindergartens. Thus, a fifth grade beginning English class may have both beginners and more advanced learners. Schools usually group their students by ability although this is also troublesome as few parents want their child in any but the top group. Schools tend to have large enrollments, so there might be 15 or more fifth grade English classes, each with 40 to 50 students.

A student's life is demanding. Many



parents want their children to be the best in the class and get top test scores so that they can get into the best university, get the highest degree, and be a credit to the family. To this end, many students are sent to cram schools after school to review their subjects, or families hire private tutors. The third (final) year of senior high school is the most challenging, with students studying for the Joint College Entrance Examination (JCEE).

In recent years other avenues have opened for the more gifted students to gain admission to a university based on a combination of high school grades and a special admission exam. However, this has only added to the burden for some students—in addition to being the best in their school subjects, they may be expected by parents to surpass the competition by excelling in another skill such as piano or dance.

Until about ten years ago, all schools

used the same curriculum and the same textbooks, which were produced by the Ministry of Education (MOE). Foreign-produced materials might only appear as extra, elective material, but there was very little time for them.

Then a decade ago, attitudes changed and MOE materials were considered out-of-date and a burden to develop, so the production of textbooks for all courses at all levels was opened to the private sector. However, the MOE still had rather strict guidelines, for example, on the number of new words introduced in each lesson or the kinds of grammatical structures introduced at each grade level. Nevertheless, groups of teachers and publishing companies jumped at the chance to apply their creativity to make something better—and to make money if their books were adopted.

Once the first draft of a textbook is produced, it has to be examined by the MOE to see that it meets their standards. Changes are suggested, and it is then piloted. Only after passing these strict procedures is a textbook approved for school use. The results, however, are a great improvement over the old MOE texts. Books are more colorful, topics are more current, oral skills receive more attention, and multimedia components are included.

Individual teachers do not choose their own textbooks; all the English teachers within a school choose to use the same materials. This procedure actually lowers the workload because all teachers for a certain level give the same test on the same day, and it is much easier for teachers and students to move around, since all students get basically the same lessons. However, there is still opportunity for teachers to use supplemental materials. For example, in one high school the teachers have a set of *Family Album* videos and routinely use them in class.

Despite this flexibility, the curriculum is still determined from the top down, starting with the Ministry of Education. In a place where the college entrance examination is still critical to one's future, there is a fairness in maintaining a certain standard curriculum for all schools.

Hours Per Week of English Study	
Grade	Hours/Week
Primary 5 and 6	2 hours
Junior High 1 and 2	3 hours
Junior High 3	3 hours*
Senior High 1, 2, 3	5 hours

*plus 2 elective hours

Cram Schools

Because education is valued so highly in Chinese culture and in this part of East Asia, many people continue to attend cram schools to study a variety of subjects. There are schools that train students to pass exams—civil service, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the JCEE, etc. Many high school seniors go to these schools in the evenings and on weekends to pass the JCEE. If they fail the first time, they may spend the subsequent year studying to try again. Even younger students take extra courses to help them pass or to get perfect grades in their school subjects.

Cram schools for English are a big business, too, with many famous name schools having branches throughout the island. They cater to everyone from kindergarten students to post-graduates, but the biggest market is usually primary and secondary school students. University English majors often take part-time jobs teaching English in the cram schools.

English and Tertiary Education

The JCEE is a rite of passage for any aspiring college student because there are more students who want to attend college than there are places available. In recent years more universities have been established, and now about 50% of students who take the JCEE gain admittance. Most of the study time of a third year senior high school student is devoted to passing this exam. English is one of the subjects tested for all students although different schools and departments weigh this score differently.

Listening and speaking skills are not tested on the JCEE, and students not majoring in English often have poor oral skills although their reading skills may be much better. University textbooks for any subject may be written in English. At the university, all students are required to take at least one year of "freshman English." The content of the course varies according to university, with some offering more of an English for specific purpose focus for students of the same major, while other schools offer various skills or enrichment courses (e.g., English through short stories).

In Taiwan, government universities are generally more prestigious than private ones although some of the private universities do have excellent programs in English and/or foreign languages. Quite a number of universities offer a major in English; the

majority focus on literature, but others have a better reputation for their linguistics courses. Many of the newly established programs call themselves departments of applied English or applied foreign languages. By this they mean that they are preparing students for the job market by offering training in business, English, translation or other practical courses. To date there are no foreign universities in Taiwan, but this is due to change with Taiwan's adopting World Trade Organization rules.

English Teachers and English Teacher Training

Up until about 10 years ago, the only places that trained teachers and provided the necessary certification were National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei and a number of teachers' colleges spread throughout the island. Now a number of other universities have education departments and, in conjunction with subject matter departments, they also grant certification. The teachers' colleges in Changhua (in central Taiwan) and Kaohsiung (in southern Taiwan) have also become full-fledged universities.

In addition to completing English requirements, would-be English teachers must complete various courses in education such as educational psychology, classroom management and courses that deal with curriculum and administrative issues. After completing the coursework, all students must complete a year of student teaching. In addition to teaching lessons in a primary or secondary school under the supervision of a classroom teacher, they also spend time learning the various administrative duties of teachers. They are also visited periodically by a college or university professor specializing in English, and they return to their colleges or universities on a regular basis for an education practicum. Only after completing this extra "fifth" year as student teachers are they issued a teaching certificate.

Although there is still a need for teachers, especially in the primary schools, competition for positions in "good" schools is stiff. It is becoming increasingly common for better high schools to hire only those with a certificate and a master's degree in teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

After certification, teachers still need to take various in-service and other courses to gain credit for promotion within their schools. A number of schools offer evening and summer courses for such credit. A certificate of attendance at the annual three-day English Teachers' Association conference gains them some credit.

Taiwan's three education universities offer both a masters and doctorate for English teaching; a number of other universities offer a masters and a few a doctorate. Thus there is ample opportunity to

obtain higher degrees in Taiwan; nevertheless, many students go abroad for advanced study, in particular for the doctorate. The domestic doctorate tends to be pursued by those who, because of family and job commitments, cannot afford to spend the time or money to live abroad for three or more years.

Teachers at the primary and secondary level can retire after 25 years of service, meaning that most retire at about the age of 50. They are usually replaced by younger and more energetic teachers with better English skills. The level of the English skills of teachers has risen quite dramatically over the past 15 years.

Teacher Organizations

Teachers do not have formal unions in Taiwan; a professional service such as teaching is considered so important to society that a strike would be illegal. Nevertheless, on Teachers' Day this year (September 28) teachers staged a huge demonstration stating their concerns; the government and public are listening.

Taiwan has a professional association, the English Teachers' Association of the Republic of China (ETA-ROC), founded in 1991, which has over 2,000 members. Although the officers are mainly university professors, the membership is predominantly primary and secondary school teachers. Over 95% of the membership are local Chinese.

ETA-ROC holds an annual conference through which teachers learn about the latest trends in their field, discuss issues with colleagues in other parts of the island and abroad, and share their classroom research. Each year we invite about 15 experts from outside Taiwan to give feature talks in addition to the approximately 300 papers and workshop presentations. Over 100 local and international publishers exhibit and provide publisher sessions in which they show attendees the latest in course materials and software.

This year our Eleventh International Symposium and Book Fair will be held in conjunction with the Fourth Pan-Asian Conference in November in Taipei. In addition to about 2,000 local members, we are expecting another 500 teachers from our sister organizations—Thai TESOL, Korea TESOL, the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), and Far Eastern (Russia) English Language Teachers' Association (FEELTA). ETA-ROC also maintains affiliate relationships with TESOL and the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), the Korean Association of Teachers of English (KATE) and the Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET).

Teaching Opportunities for Foreigners

Because of the requirements for certification, foreigners cannot teach in the govern-

ment-run primary and secondary schools. Recently, however, with the need for more primary school English teachers, some schools have arranged to bring in qualified native speakers to assist in teaching. Most schools attempt to provide these foreign teachers with some survival training in Chinese and classroom management; a major role for these helpers is to provide native speaker input, especially for speaking activities. Some secondary schools also bring in expatriates for the same purpose. However, these programs are not large-scale because Korean and Japanese experience has shown that positive results come only from careful planning.

Foreigners do teach in Taiwan's many private schools, and native speakers are in demand. Sometimes the situation is unfair: a foreign-looking native speaker may receive an hourly wage three or more times greater than that paid to a Chinese-American! Or a native speaker with no teacher training may be hired over or get more pay than the nonnative speaker with excellent English skills and a degree in TESL/TEFL. Other schools may be more reasonable. Among my acquaintances teaching in private kindergartens and cram schools are, for example, Greeks, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, South Africans and Belgians. Such is the thirst for English skills! The better schools look for teaching credentials; the worst may cheat you out of your hard-earned salary.

In order to work in Taiwan, you need

an Alien Residence Certificate (ARC). Your employer will arrange that for you. There are still those who "freelance" on a tourist visa. This is illegal, and requires leaving Taiwan every six months to obtain a new six-month tourist visa. In recent years, the government has cracked down on illegal cram schools and encouraged them to hire employees legally and arrange the ARC. This means that the number of native-speaker adventurers has dropped and the number of native speakers with teacher training has risen.

At the university level, foreigners are hired in the same way as local Chinese and receive the same benefits. Salaries at the national (government) universities are fixed according to rank and seniority; salaries at private universities tend not to be as high as those at government universities.

Challenges Ahead for English Language Teaching in Taiwan

Most of the best teachers and the best schools are located in the north of the island, around the greater Taipei area. Here one finds more English speakers among the general population as there is a higher concentration of educated people. English education and education in general is not as good in the central and southern areas and in rural areas.

Another complication arises from the greater prevalence of Taiwanese speakers as one goes south. Mandarin Chinese is the language of the schools. Those children

whose home language is Taiwanese face a double burden of learning a new language for school and then English as a third language. The pros and cons of starting English in early primary school have long been argued with regard to this issue.

Recently the MOE has initiated the Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum, and teachers are in the process of learning how it should or could work. In principle, it should allow more flexibility in lesson planning, but the results remain to be seen.

Within the past year, Taiwan gained admission to the World Trade Organization. The implications have yet to be felt. More foreign universities and other businesses will now be able to open branches here. There is sure to be a greater need for English skills. Some officials in the Taiwan government, in their own rush to board the bandwagon of internationalization, have proposed that English be made one of Taiwan's official languages. The challenge will be to keep up with teacher training for the needs of the population.

Johanna Katchen left the United States to teach at National Tsing Hua University in Taiwan in 1985. She teaches in the undergraduate and M.A. in TEFL program and supervises student teachers. She has been an officer in the English Teachers' Association of the Republic of China since 1997 and is chair of the November 2002 Fourth Pan-Asian Conference.



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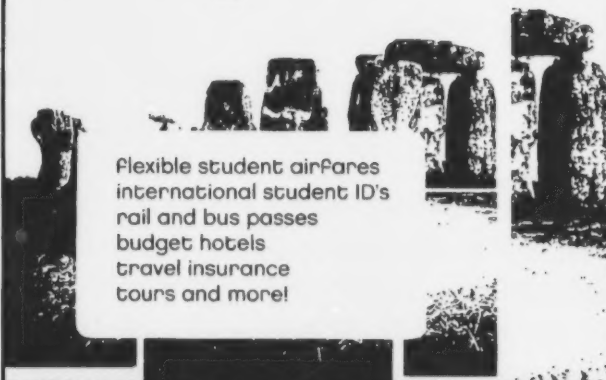
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Job Hunting The Next Time Around

If I were looking for a new ESL teaching position today, there are several things that I would do differently than I did the last time I looked for a job.

□ **Find out who is on the committee to select the new teacher.** At my last interview, not only were there three program managers and their supervisor, but there were also two office managers. They had a vote in the process as well. Would I have prepared differently if I had known that ahead of time? Hmm, I certainly would have thought out how I could make the office managers' lives easier. Office managers are often overworked and underpaid. They don't want someone who is going to increase their workload (and rightly so). Make sure that is how you present yourself. Showing up early and asking them to make copies of your résumé (as one recent interviewee actually did at my school) is not a way to win friends and influence office managers.

□ **Find out who had the job last and why they left.** A colleague related the following story: It seems that, in the process of being interviewed, the committee mentioned what the previous person had done in August and what the person before her had done in February. It turns out that three people had held this position within the last year. Decide what this tells you before you interview.

□ **In the best of all possible worlds, talk to the person who had the job last.** It's amazing what you can find out that

way. While it may not be the gospel truth, it does provide a perspective on the working conditions.

□ **Some years ago I was asked in an interview how I would teach passive voice...to engineering students.** Teaching passive voice is not particularly difficult, but I was stumped as to how to apply that to engineering students. And, yes, I came up with twelve different ways to do it after the interview. Could I have predicted the question? Well, it was an interview for a position at a university in the Middle East, and I knew that I would be teaching engineering students. Thankfully, I've gotten smarter over the years.

So what does all this mean? Anticipate. Anticipate who, what, when, where, why and how. Some things are truly predictable (as in questions about how a person would actually teach English to engineering students) while others are less so. You can only prepare for what can be predicted, but sitting down and deciding what can be predicted and preparing for that can get you the job.

INFORMATION REQUEST: Do you make some or all of your income preparing curriculum materials? Contribute to a future column by sending me an e-mail at the address below.

Thomas Nixon is the co-author of Bears' Guide to the Best Education Degrees by Distance Learning (Ten Speed Press). He can be reached at tnixon@cviip.net.

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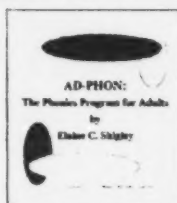
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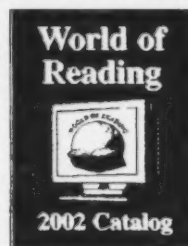


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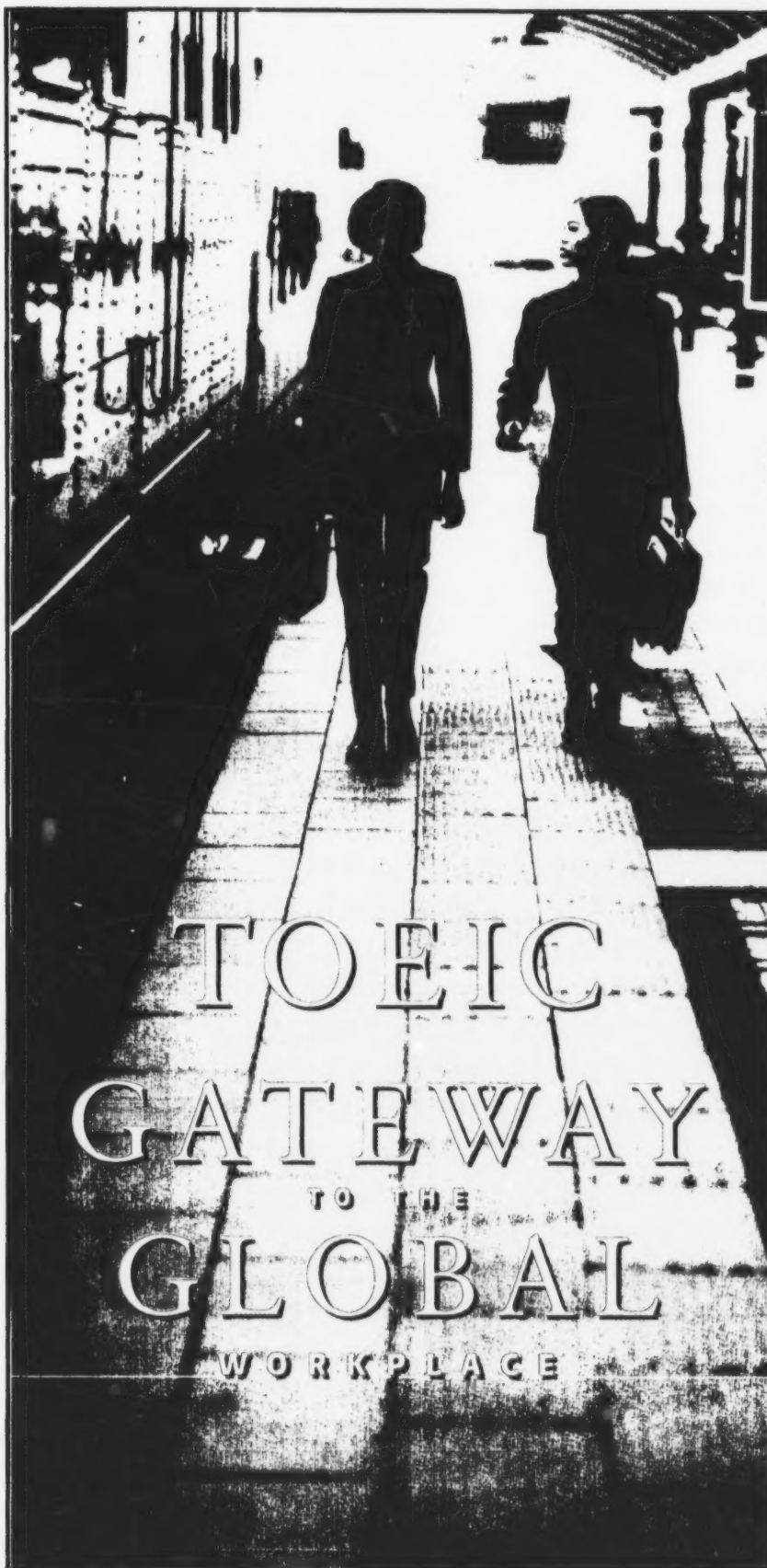
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163A



Feature Films Teach Language and Culture

We know that language does not stand alone but comes with cultural "baggage," you might say. *What* we say is just as important as *how* and *when* we say it, *to whom* we say it and *why*. All of these are related to the culture and situation in which the language is spoken. Hans Straub shows how feature films can be used to help ESL/EFL students learn the culture that goes along with the language they learn.

You don't need eons to see how language evolves—we've all witnessed changes in English, regardless of how long we've been around. Richard Firsten describes some of the changes that have taken place and that are taking place in English and shares advice to help English language teachers deal with these changes.

It's often a challenge to get students settled and comfortable in the right English classes. Joel Murray's article on creating placement outlines a practical process for designing tests that fit the needs of your students and your program.

English clubs and drama competitions are just two of the exciting ways that teachers in Senegal are getting their students into English. We think you'll be inspired by Kay Davis' article on English language teaching in this West African nation.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal
Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director



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FEATURES

Language, Culture and the Feature Film
by Hans Straub 10

Teaching English in Francophone Senegal
by Kay Davis 14

Creating Placement Tests
by Joel Murray 22

Evolution: It's Not Just For Biology
by Richard Firsten 26

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Note.....4

Letters to the Editor.....5

News Briefs 6

Conference Calendar 7

Reviews.....20

Catalog Showcase.....30

COLUMNS

Christine Meloni's Networthy 8

Joy Egbert's Technology 18

Richard Firsten, The Grammar Guy 21

Thomas Nixon's Employment Focus.....29

Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?



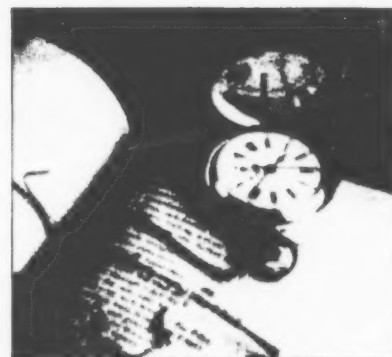
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Page 10



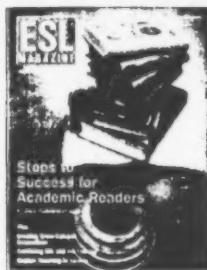
Page 16



Page 22



Page 26



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Steps to Success for Academic Readers

► In "Steps to Success for Academic Readers," Jean Zukowski/Faust has again shown the value of her no-nonsense approach to education. The article brims over with first-rate, practical advice that cuts through academic jargon to offer both ESL students in academic settings and their teachers a plethora of useful advice.

Having herself had the experience of second language learning, Zukowski/Faust can lean on her personal background as well as on her vast professional knowledge as she guides the perplexed Moon-Kyung through twelve pages of academic reading. The steps

she offers Moon-Kyung are no less useful for ESL classroom practitioners who frequently find themselves stumped by students groaningly insisting on interlinear translation.

I found Zukowski/Faust's suggestions that Moon-Kyung start out her reading assignment with the syllabus-based written sentence of "I am reading this assignment to find out what..." and that she look for "interesting tidbits" particularly appealing. I was also impressed with the three strategies of reading instruction that were clearly formulated at the end of the article. It is a broad overview of the reading process that informs teachers of the many aspects and possibilities of the reading process.

—NATALIE HESS, PH.D.
 Professor of BME/ESL at NAU in Yuma

Combining ESL and Job Training

► This article by Stephaney Jones-Vo was timely, interesting, well thought-out and served as a pertinent reminder that there are indeed many immigrants at work in the USA. It seems to me that, while the article points out three wonderful examples of ESL being utilized effectively in company settings in Iowa, there must be a much larger number of [immigrant] workers who are NOT receiving ESL services, not only in Iowa, but elsewhere in the USA. Therefore, by deduction, it would appear that there must be a large gap,

indeed a chasm, between the demand for ESL and the supply of ESL services within organizations that employ immigrant workers. I would very much like to see more articles about this subject by other ESL professionals with ESL workplace experience and, specifically, HOW to get such jobs and WHERE the biggest demand for them is. The article points out that Iowa is "the only state (with a) funded agency of its kind in the United States" that promotes ESL/job combination for refugee clients. I live in California, probably the state with the MOST immigrants of any state, and there is certainly no such agency here. I find this ironic in the extreme. It is worth noting that another interesting article about workplace ESL is in *ESL Magazine's* July/August 1998 issue: "Going Corporate: Teaching English in the Workplace" by Faith Hayflich.

—PHILIP N. CARSON
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Thanks!

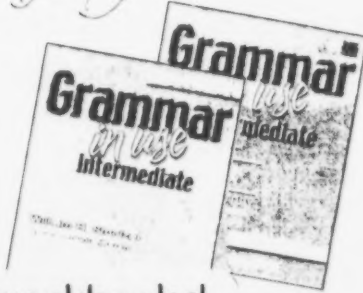
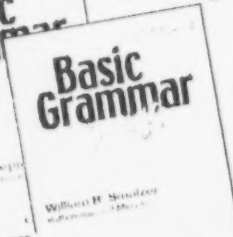
► I really enjoyed the copy [Sept./Oct. 2002] of this magazine I received in the mail. I have been teaching second language learners for 10 years, and I found many of the articles informative and interesting. Thank you.

—KIM ALLRED
 Windsor High School

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Demographics Published on Limited English Proficient Students

New data on the demographics of limited English proficient students are available on the website of the Office of English Language Acquisition/National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. The data are compiled from the annual Survey of States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services (SEA Survey) for 2000-2001 as well as national and state census data. The SEA Survey gathers information in three areas: 1) the enrollment levels of limited English proficient (LEP) students; 2) the educational condition of reported LEP students; and 3) the services received by LEP students. View the report at www.ncela.gwu.edu/states/reports/seareports/0001/sea0001.pdf. For census data, LEP enrollment growth and top languages for individual states, go to www.ncela.gwu.edu/states/reports/statedata/2001/index.html. Census and state-reported data are also available as posters that may be viewed/printed online or ordered from NCELA. Mini-Poster: The Growing Numbers of LEP Students, 2000-2001 www.ncela.gwu.edu/states/stateposter.pdf. Poster: English Language Learners and the U.S. Census: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/states/ellcensus90s.pdf>. To order use the publications order form at www.ncela.gwu.edu/orderform.pdf



Teacher Recruitment Among Community College Students

According to a report published by Recruiting New Teachers, teacher preparation programs at a growing number of community colleges nationwide could supply many of the teachers needed in the United States in the next ten years. The report, *Tapping Potential: Community College Students and America's Teacher Recruitment Challenge*, states that the nation's 1,100 community colleges, where 20% of public school teachers started their higher education, remain an untapped resource in addressing the nation's teacher shortage. If additional resources are set aside to strengthen teacher preparation programs at the community college level, America could cut its shortage of 2.4 million teachers by one-quarter or more. In addition, strengthened teacher education programs at these institutions could also address the lack of diversity among the nation's teaching force. The report offers information about the potential of community college programs and their students to address teacher shortages, as well as a state-by-state overview and profiles of programs that are effective at helping future teachers prepare for careers in teaching. Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. is a national non-profit organization based in Belmont, MA, founded in 1986 to raise esteem for teaching, expand the pool of prospective teachers, and improve the nation's teacher recruitment and development policies and practices. <http://www.recruitingteachers.org>

New Software Helps Teachers Take Advantage of Tax Law Changes and Save Money

According to the National Education Association, teachers spend an average of \$400 out of their own pockets each year on classroom supplies and books. Teachers rarely recoup these expenses because until now only expenses that exceeded 2% of their income could be deducted. But that's all changed. In March, President Bush signed the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act. One little-known tax break included in that law now allows teachers to deduct up to \$250 of out-of-pocket expenses for such things as books, teaching aids, even crayons. The Bush administration estimates the law will save teachers \$409 million over the next two years. The deduction is available to eligible educators in both public and private settings, from kindergarten through twelfth grade. A person must work at least 900 hours during the year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide, and is eligible for this deduction regardless of whether or not he or she itemizes. The IRS recommends that educators develop a system to keep track these out-of-pocket purchases. They recommend tracking the date, amount of purchase, and the purpose of the purchase for all items.



ItsDeductible

In early December, an Omaha company, Income Dynamics, introduced a teacher's edition of their software product called ItsDeductible. ItsDeductible tracks a well-known but often underestimated tax deduction—non-cash charitable contributions, enabling people to increase their tax savings by \$300 or more by valuing the items they give to charity such as clothing, toys and other used household items. This new tool determines and assigns actual fair-market valuations to commonly donated items, allowing users to maximize their non-cash charitable contribution.

ItsDeductible also tracks other donation types such as mileage, monetary and out-of-pocket donations. The company is adding a planner designed especially for teachers, which will help them easily organize their receipts, keep records of the amounts spent, and generate necessary reports. ItsDeductible: Teacher's Edition is designed to simplify teachers' record keeping and provide a way to increase their tax refund check. Visit www.itsdeductible.com for additional information.

Title III Toolkit for "No Child Left Behind" Now Online

The Title III Toolkit created by the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) as a CD-ROM for OELA's "Celebrate our Rising Stars" Summit is now available online. Title III is the part of the No Child Left Behind Act that addresses the education of limited English proficient students. The Toolkit provides resources from the U.S. Department of Education intended to assist educators in implementing Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. These resources are divided into three topic areas: assessment and accountability, networking and partnerships, and program evaluation. In addition, some material has been targeted to three major stakeholder groups: state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs) and teacher preparation (professional development) programs. Included are references to the law, official guidance and other useful documents and Web resources. The Title III Toolkit will be updated as additional information becomes available from the Department of Education. The Title III Toolkit may be accessed online at www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit/cd/index.swf. The OELA "Celebrate Our Rising Stars" Summit agenda and presentations are now available at www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit/index.html.

Conference Calendar

November

- 2-3 **TESOL Macedonia-Thrace**. Thessaloniki, Greece. Contact tesolmth@compulink.gr.
- 7-9 **Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers and the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers**. Prince Edward Island, Canada. Contact casl@istar.ca.
- 8-9 **Ohio TESOL and Lau Resource Center**. Columbus, OH. Contact www.cill.ohio.edu/~otesol/conference/conference_f2002.htm.
- 8-9 **Colorado TESOL**. Longmont, CO. Contact Larry Fisher, 303-735-4234.
- 8 **Louisiana TESOL**. Baton Rouge, LA. Contact Brian and Susan Ary, 504-865-5803 or 504-280-7345.
- 8 **Oregon TESOL**. Salem, OR. Contact rkurzet@pcc.edu.
- 16 **Indiana TESOL**. Indianapolis, IN. Contact Ahmar Mahboob, 812-855-8012.
- 16 **NNETESOL**. Manchester, NH. Contact Rosemary Orlando, 603-668-2211.
- 21-23 **TESOL Ontario**. Toronto, ON. Contact TESOL Ontario, www.tesolontario.org/.
- 22-23 **Puerto Rico TESOL**. San Juan, PR. Contact Naomi Vega Trieves, nvega@sagrado.edu.
- 22-23 **TESOL Italy**. Rome, Italy. Contact Paolo Coppari, tesol@usis.it.
- 25-27 **Online Educa Berlin**. Berlin, Germany. Contact beate.kleessen@icwe.net.

December

- 13-15 **EGYPTESOL**. Cairo, Egypt. Contact Deena Boraie, dboraie@aucegypt.edu.
- 27-30 **Modern Language Association**. New York, NY. Contact MLA, 646-576-5263.

January 2003

- 6-10 **Hawaii International Conference on Education**. Honolulu, HI. Contact 808-947-7187.
- 22-24 **Costa Rica TESOL**. San Jose, Costa Rica. Contact Elieth Matamoros, elieth_m@hotmail.com.
- 23-25 **Thailand TESOL**. Bangkok, Thailand. Contact Suchada Nimmanit, nsuchada@chula.ac.th.

February

- 22 **NYS-TESOL**. Long Island City, NY. Contact Joanne Grumet, jgrumet@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- 28-1 **Illinois TESOL**. Chicago, IL. Contact 846-692-8287.

March

- 12-14 **TESOL Arabia**. Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Contact Kathy Bird, kathy_bird@zu.ac.ae.
- 25-29 **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)**. Baltimore, MD. Contact 703-836-0774.

April

- 4-6 **TESOL Spain**. Valencia, Spain. Contact dwestall@dm.upv.es.
- 10-13 **CATESOL**. Pasadena, CA. Contact Eleanor Black, 323-343-4330.

Survey Challenges Stereotypes Regarding Minority Students

Academic aspirations and student attitudes about school differ only slightly among African American, Hispanic, Asian and white students, according to survey results from the 15 suburban school districts that are members of the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN). Based on 40,000 responses from secondary students, the study challenges many preconceptions about racial and ethnic differences among students groups. The student survey explored issues such as teacher-student relationships, students' understanding of classroom material, homework and peer pressure. One finding challenges the commonly held belief that African American and Hispanic students often have an "anti-school" attitude: those students were more likely than white or Asian students to report that their friends think it is "very important" to "study hard and get good grades." Overall, survey responses indicated that African American and Hispanic youth in Network districts have as much desire to succeed in school as their white and Asian counterparts. Disparities exist, however, in their mastery of skills, and gaps remain in the resources available to support their achievement.

The Minority Student Achievement Network is a national coalition of 15 multiracial, suburban school districts across the United States. The Network's mission is to discover, develop and implement the means to ensure high academic achievement for students of color, specifically African American and Latino students. www.msanet.org.

Test is Adopted in Several States to Meet NCLB Requirements

As states hurry to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), Ballard & Tighe, a specialized testing company in California and publisher of the IDEA® Proficiency Test (IPT), has been selected as the exclusive language proficiency test provider in Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee and New Hampshire. The IPT tests also have been evaluated and approved for use in New Jersey, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona. While the IPT was designed originally as a placement and diagnostic instrument, it also can be used to measure adequate yearly progress, a requirement under Title III of NCLB. The IPT is a standardized, norm-referenced test that measures comprehension, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The test has been described as easily administered and scored. Ballard & Tighe provides test administration and scoring training free of charge. Ballard & Tighe has begun the development of a new series of language proficiency tests expected to be available in 2004.



Christine Meloni's NETWORTHY

Enjoy Art and Music at the WebMuseum

<http://sunsite.icm.edu.pl/wm/>

The WebMuseum is a labor of love created by Frenchman Nicolas Pioch who teaches computer science at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris. Pioch has brought together hundreds of paintings and several selections of classical music in his online museum. Teachers and students alike will enjoy browsing through this museum, which is open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Teachers can use these authentic materials for content-based reading and writing assignments. The WebMuseum's art section is divided into Special Exhibitions and General Exhibitions. The Special Exhibitions includes over 100 works by Paul Cezanne as well as a collection of medieval art.

The General Exhibitions is the heart of the WebMuseum and the location of the Famous Paintings collection. You can access these paintings in three ways: by artist, by theme and by painting style.

Artist Index. This index includes almost 150 artists listed alphabetically. By clicking on a name, you have access to a biography of the artist and reproductions of paintings. Most biographies include links to other artists. Let's look at two examples.

If you click on Leonardo da Vinci, you can read his biography (which includes links to Michelangelo, Raphael and Titian) and look at seven of his paintings including "Mona Lisa," "Ginevra de' Benci" and "The Last Supper." If you click on Mary Cassatt, you will find her biography (with links to Degas, Monet, Morisot, Renoir and

Pissarro) and 15 paintings including "Girl in a Blue Armchair," "Reading in a Garden" and "Woman and Child against a Green Background."

Themes Index. This index includes the following eight themes: "Gothic Painting," "The Italian Renaissance," "The Northern Renaissance," "Baroque," "Revolution and Restoration," "Impressionism," "The 20th Century" and "Japanese Art and Architecture."

Painting Style. Styles in this index include "Classicism," "Fauvism" and "Surrealism." (Some overlapping occurs between the Themes and the Painting Styles indices.)

The Other Resources section includes "Visit Paris," a tour of Paris, and "The Auditorium" where you can listen to classical pieces by Bach, Mendelssohn, Liszt and Beethoven.

Many mirror sites are provided in North America, South America, Australia, Asia and Europe. Your speed of access is, therefore, greatly improved when you choose the site nearest to you.

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She may be reached at cfmeloni@hotmail.com. Include "Networthy" as the subject.

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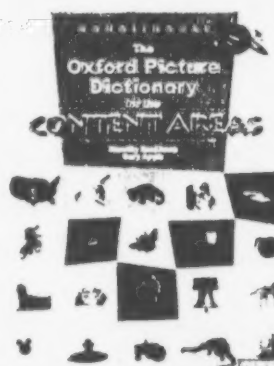
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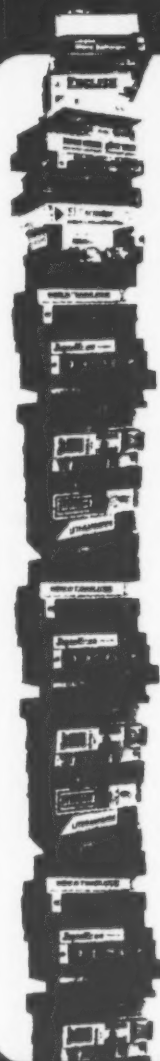


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Language, Culture, and the Feature Film

BY HANS STRAUB

Language teachers have come to recognize the important role of culture in determining language practices. By our culture, we are taught what to say and how to say it and any "body language" or behavior that typically accompanies our words. Such scripting of our communication is a product of our cultural inheritance.

Theorists have repeatedly called on instructors to teach language and culture in tandem (Hughes 1998). The rationale is that language does not exist in a vacuum, but is an integral part of the daily practices of people. By separating the one from the other, we do a disservice to those who need more than grammar and syntax at the advanced levels of second-language acquisition. Such students need language experienced within virtually realistic, second-cultural contexts.

We often talk about teaching culture, but how do you do this in a second-language program? How do we combine language learning with learning about behavior patterns of a people whose values differ from your own?

Finally, within such a framework, how do second language students experience "real language" in its cultural context? One way to provide cultural contexts for language is by using feature films for instructional purposes.

The Benefits of Feature Films

Feature films are the most realistic and captivating of instructional media. They outshine most purpose-made, often outdated second language instructional films. Feature movies

are also more realistic than textbooks. No other media lends itself to the precise examination of cultural practice—nonverbal communication, dress, gesture or facial expression. No other medium allows us to listen to realistic English spoken by characters who are in definable cultural situations. No other medium has the power

pose: they can trigger emotions that strengthen the impact of the visual stimuli (Fox 1994b). The combination of image, language and emotions has an affective power that we as teachers do not always appreciate or make use of. Through film, we can integrate language and culture learning for maximum impact (Loneragan 1992).

But let us pause to note what we mean by cultural learning. The most accessible way to understand a foreign culture is by gaining an awareness of what lies behind the words and actions of the people we are studying. That is, by understanding the values, motivations, and expectations that underlie language use and behavior, we gain an insight into the cultural "scripts" that prompt words and actions within particular cultural circumstances (film scenes). By becoming aware of what is said, how it is said, what gestures and other "body language" accompany language within specific contexts, the second

language student is better able to come to grips with the language and culture he is studying.

The features of language that can be examined using film are choice of words, tone of voice, volume, formality, informality, slang and any other elements the instructor wishes to stress. The goal of using films is to see what characteristics of language are used in specific situations, how these are habitually combined with gesture and facial expressions, and how these express values or expectations (the



A scene from the film "The Emperor's Club."

to penetrate the mind quite like film.

This power is readily recognized. According to investigators of cognition, the mind largely perceives seeing and thinking in tandem. That is, words can conjure up images, and images can raise words in the mind (Fox 1994a). Just how this occurs is not well understood, yet it seems there is an intimate cognitive link between images and words that holds benefits for language learning.

Moreover, there is an additional dynamic to films that serves our pur-

words and deeds typically expected by others) in the second culture.

Choosing Films

Which films are good to use? This depends on the availability of movies and, of course, your students' abilities to understand them. From my own experience, I find many students do not understand what is actually going on in, let's say, American movies. They lack the cultural knowledge of time and place (setting); they don't understand why characters (especially women) act the way they do; they have trouble catching the dialogue, especially if it is slang; and they can't see the social or didactic (or propagandistic) purposes served by film. All of these give us potential approaches to the examination of movies.

My own students are high-intermediate to advanced ESL learners—currently 17-year-old, male Arabs hoping to attend college in the United States. Their English is usually good in that they are able to read and express themselves orally, but they lack accurate knowledge of American culture that would make sense of what they will experience abroad. In the hopes of remedying deficiencies in cultural knowledge, we teach intercultural communication in conjunction with English for academic purposes. Lately, I have attempted to combine language and culture through the medium of film.

The movie that best meets my objectives of placing language into an American cultural context is *October Sky* (1999). I chose this film because its characters—American teenagers—and their situation in life are similar to what my own students face. They need to make choices, need to find a direction, and they are going off to college in places that they have not experienced. Further, they have to contend with the expectations of their parents, their community and their country. In short, there is a high degree of identification between my students and the boys in this film.

A Process for Using Feature Films

How do I use *October Sky* to teach both language and culture? First, because we teach intercultural communication at my school, our students understand the relationships among values, expectations, and behaviors

within cultural contexts—behaviors are the outcomes of expectations and cultural values. They know that what one says and does follows what is expected, more or less, along the lines of a "script"—if all goes well. Deviations from cultural norms often leave negative consequences in their wake. *October Sky* illustrates this quite well.

I tell my students to think like anthropologists. From listening to me, they already know that I mean they ought to analyze situations objectively, putting aside the stereotypes of Americans that they have inherited. Their job is to look for behavior in the movie that reflects "American values," as identified by Gary Althen in his book *American Ways*, a valuable primer for any teacher of culture. Students watch for signs of individualism, independence, hard work, future-orientation, faith in science and progress, initiative and action, heroes to follow, and informality among people of different social status. In other words, they look for what makes Americans tick, in addition to considering how language is used by "real people."

I have a hard time explaining American gender relationships found in the film. Behavior involved in "dating" remains a problem. Teachers will have to decide how much behavior they should explain and how to explain it. Some behavior may be taboo in the cultural contexts teachers find themselves in. Stepping into forbidden territory can be every teacher's nightmare, so choose your movies accordingly. Later, I'll give some titles for you to consider.

That aside, I often attempt to explain what "democracy" and "gender equality" mean in the American interpretation of these concepts, noting how valued these have become over centuries of social struggle. Since my students at this point have little knowledge of U.S. history, bringing up "movements for equality" or "human rights" says little to them. They have an easier time recognizing basic values like individualism, self-fulfillment, the value of education, and the cooperation of the community in meeting individual ambitions.

Once students have discussed the film in small groups and with me (this takes well over two hours, viewing included), we embark on writing a summary of our reactions to what we

have witnessed. We explain the dilemma that the characters experience, alternative courses of action open to them, and the values that these alternatives would reflect. We attempt to characterize the historic period of the action (in this case, the late 1950s), and try to explain what the viewer is supposed to learn from the film. As this latter consideration can open the door to "political" considerations (film-as-propaganda), I stick to "What do you think the filmmakers are trying to show the audience?" types of questions. (This avoids the Hollywood equals U.S. government "mouth-piece" reactions.) There are other questions that can be asked: "How would someone in your culture handle the situation this character is in?" "How does this film help you understand the American way of life?" or "Now that you have seen this film, how has your impression of American life changed?" These, of course, can also be the topics of any writing students are asked to do.

In using a film to teach, I freeze the film occasionally to call attention to what characters are saying and how they are saying it. ("What did he just say? What expression did you hear?") As the setting of this story is in West Virginia, where a heavy dialect of English is spoken, most of my students have never heard anything like this type of American English. Similarly, they are unfamiliar with most American slang. I ask them to note the tone of voice and volume characters use to express emotions or to assert themselves, and I ask them to observe facial expressions and accompanying gestures. Again, pausing a scene to look at an expression is an appropriate technique. You can also turn the sound off and watch for expressions and gestures. All of these elements are culturally-determined, and all combine in communication. By familiarizing themselves with the communication patterns of Americans, our students, hopefully, will be better prepared for their life abroad. Not only this, but they will be able to incorporate gestures into their foreign-language lexicon.

For students at an intermediate English level, I suggest showing film segments rather than full-length films; you can point out linguistic practices and cultural elements in these shorter pieces. If you have access to films on TV, record parts of these for class-

room use. You can also cut and paste segments from different films, from video-to-video.

Additional Films for Cultural Focus

There are several other films I can recommend for their cultural content. I have shown segments of *Zulu* (1963) to illustrate the different battle tactics employed by the British and Zulu warriors—as these reflect the cultural values of the respective peoples. I have also used *Empire of the Sun* (1987) for students being prepared for colleges in the Far East. Here, we talk about both history and values in conflict, British and Imperial Japanese. In both of these films, the values are those of the military: perseverance, stoicism, obedience to superiors, and courage, but also compassion and cooperation. These films also offer lots of fodder for language analysis.

Another film I can recommend is *Shane* (1952) for its historic conflict of farmers and cattle ranchers—sedentary, “civilized” life versus the life of the open plain in America. *Shane* is also a classic when it comes to presenting the entrepreneurial, progressive, or utilitarian characteristics of American life that have produced one of the most productive economies in the world. Similarly, *Shane* lends itself to the exploration of the myth of the cowboy, the loner who signifies individualism, a defining characteristic of the American psyche.

Other films you might consider showing include *Stand and Deliver* (1988), about a tough Mexican-American teacher in an inner-city high school beset with grave social problems and high social expectations that can only be met through determination and optimism. This film can give foreign students an idea of the cultural difficulties that immigrants from non-Protestant backgrounds have often faced on coming to America. It lends itself well to intercultural comparisons and to an introduction to Chicano Spanglish, a unique Spanish-American English.

Another feature film, *The Outsiders* (1983), can be used to examine the values and behaviors of rebellious American youth of the 1960s. Again, this film is laden with slang typical of its period and will appeal to young people curious about a way of life different from their own.

My final recommendation is *Bridge to the Sun* (1960), made to introduce post-war American audiences to the Japanese they most recently defeated. This film is great for showing how difficult it often is to fit into a foreign culture. Its main character, an American wife of a Japanese diplomat, needs to come to terms with the expectations that traditional Japanese of the 1940s had of women. It also lends itself to discussion of Imperial Japanese values, issues of cultural conflict, prejudice, and cross-cultural tolerance.

I hope that I have given the reader some insights into how to use feature films for both language and cultural exploration. Incorporating cross-cultural studies into language programs will prove rewarding and give you and your students new avenues to explore. The pedagogic uses of films are limited only by the instructor's imagination.

Canadian Hans Straub has been teaching ESL for over twenty years in Canada and abroad. He is ABD in English Literature and has an interest in language, culture and visual literacy.

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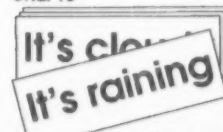


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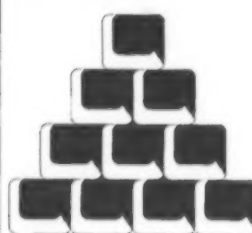
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English Teaching in Francophone Senegal

BY KAY DAVIS

Senegal, the Francophone center of West Africa, is actively preparing students to participate in the English-speaking world. Currently there are approximately 1,100 public secondary school English teachers and approximately 500 to 700 English teachers in private secondary schools. Senegal's location as a West African port, its participation in United Nations peace keeping forces and African unity organizations, and its English-speaking president have all helped to promote the teaching of English.

Education in Senegal

Senegal has compulsory education for students up to the age 16, at least on the books; however, one sees many school-age children on city streets and in the countryside during school hours. When asked about this, children answer in a variety of ways: "I am helping support my family," "I attend a Koranic school," or "My parents don't understand the importance of education." For a variety of reasons, many children do not attend school, which is mandated but not enforced.

When Senegal became independent from France in 1960, the French educational system was well entrenched, and in most instances, continues today. Children can attend public or private school, but the Ministry of Education establishes the curriculum and teacher standards, and all students are expected to "sit for exams" that will advance them to the next educational level. Generally, children in rural areas do not attend kindergarten, but Senegal's President Wade is trying to find ways to encourage pre-school opportunities for more of the population.

Education is divided into two different levels: elementary school for six years and then a "lycee." The lycee is a

combined seven-year junior/senior high school: junior high for four years and high school for three years. Students can receive an achievement of completion award at the end of the six years of elementary school. For those who choose to continue studying, English language instruction is a requirement for all students beyond elementary school. Students who plan to attend a public lycee must take and pass an entrance exam. Students who choose to attend a private lycee may not need to take entrance exams. At the end of the fourth

well receive a bachelor's degree at the end of three years and a master's degree at the end of four years.

One of the most significant contributions of the government to the educational system in Senegal is the existence of public lycees for girls. There are approximately five public lycees for girls only, and one of them, a boarding school, is dedicated to educating the top 25 elementary female candidates. Girls from around the country attend this school, which is well funded and well equipped.



The Ministry and English Teaching

English teaching in Senegal is a countrywide commitment, and that commitment is growing. Teachers of English in Senegal enjoy growing support through a variety of organizations and support systems. The Ministry of Education has a "Bureau d'Anglais," which is responsible for the teaching of English in public schools. The head of this bureau is Mrs. Aissatou Coly, a former English teacher and technical advisor who has participated in English teaching study programs in both Great Britain and the United States.

The oversight of public school English teaching is achieved through a cadre of

inspectors and academic advisors who come together for a training and update session every summer; the training is hosted at the British-Senegalese Institute by the British Council, the United Kingdom's international organization for educational and cultural relations. Inspectors discuss their "cell" activities in the outlying regions and are taught new methodologies and concepts of English language teaching by the group of two to three cadre members who have most recently returned from study courses in Great Britain. Cell

year (junior high) another exam is recommended but not required. The final three years at the lycee are spent preparing for the baccalaureate exam, or simply the "bac." This exam is difficult and students spend hours preparing for it. For those who pass the "bac," the university awaits, but a college degree is dependent on passing a yearly exit/entrance exam to advance to the next year of study. The exit/entrance exams are given twice a year, so students who fail in the spring exam can sit for the fall exam. Students who do

well receive a bachelor's degree at the end of three years and a master's degree at the end of four years.

activities for the coming year are discussed and confirmed at the conclusion of the training.

Throughout the year, additional training may be provided by other cadre members returning from study abroad programs in the United States or Great Britain, by members of the British Council, the U.S. State Department's Regional English Language Officer (RELO) located in Dakar, the capital, and/or trainers from the teacher training college. Recently, the Bureau d'Anglais has worked closely with the British Council to conduct regional training sessions for teachers. In short, English programs and English teachers in Senegal try to work together so that all benefit—especially students.

English Clubs

English clubs are a vital part of English teaching and learning in Senegal. These clubs are organized as after-school activities and are enormously interactive, creative and dynamic. English teachers at both the public and private schools provide a structured environment for a variety of English activities. The activities are organized in a spirited competition against English clubs from other schools in a region. Recent activities have included plays written and produced by students on topics such as HIV/AIDS, child slave labor, and the United Nations Year of the Child.

Clubs compete at local levels and the club with the winning play advances to a regional competition. Regional winners travel to the island of Goree to attempt to win prizes such as computers and "boom boxes" for their schools. There is stiff competition that is timed and judged by native English-speakers from the British and American communities. The dramatizations are complete with background props, music and costumes. Tee-shirts are provided to all competitors. While the subject matter for the competitions is serious, English club members participate in an atmosphere of fun.

Travel arrangements are made and sponsored by the Senegalese TESOL affiliate—Association of Teachers of English in Senegal (ATES)—and funded by the RELO office and the U.S. Office of Public Diplomacy.

Teacher Preparation

Teacher preparation is separate from the major degree programs. The majority of English teachers hold degrees in English literature and/or linguistics. The

regular academic degree program is followed by one or two years of teacher preparation at the Ecole Supérieure Normale (ENS). After passing an entrance exam, would-be teachers prepare for either junior high or senior high school teaching positions. After one year of study at ENS one is eligible to teach junior high school, and after two years one is eligible to teach senior high school. All future teachers in Senegal study methodology (separated into the four skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing) and psycho-pedagogy.

There are two new, less rigorous programs for teacher training designed to address the shortage of English teachers throughout the country. The first program allows students who have passed the baccalaureate to forgo a bachelor's or master's degree program and enroll in special courses at ENS for two years of study to become eligible to teach junior high French and English. The second program, a specially funded project to increase the number of teachers, allows students who have received a bachelor's or master's degree to teach but requires that their summer vacations be spent in intensive methodology and pedagogy courses towards a teaching certificate.

A program developed by ENS and funded by the African Bank of Development will expand the number of English inspectors and pedagogical advisors. This new program creates advancement opportunities for experienced teachers who possess a master's degree and a senior high school teaching certificate, who are under the age of 35, and who have taught for five to ten years. These candidates can apply for and take an exam for a special training course through ENS. The first group of these teachers began study in 2002.

Exchange Programs and Study Abroad

Both the U.S. Office of Public Diplomacy/American Cultural Center and the British Council provide study abroad programs for English teachers. Fulbright scholarships to the United States provide the opportunity for advanced study in a variety of programs, and English teachers are often the recipients because of their English ability. Fulbright scholars pursue degrees in English teaching, American literature, American studies, and language and culture classes.

An additional Fulbright program also features a high school teacher

exchange program that matches American French teachers with Senegalese English teachers for a year-long teaching exchange. The program, which has two to three exchanges per year, has been extremely successful and is currently in its fourteenth year. People interested in establishing a similar exchange program should contact the Fulbright High School Exchange Office in Washington, D.C. (Program Coordinator, ECA/A/S/X, 301 4th Street, S. W. Washington, DC 20547)

An additional U.S.-sponsored training abroad program is the Summer Institute in the United States. This program is geared toward English speaking school administrators, often from the junior high or senior high school levels. In 2002, the two participants from Senegal were both English teachers who also served in the administrative capacity of English inspector and/or advisor and school administrator. The number of recent Summer Institute participants has been limited to 16, all of whom are from Africa. Study-abroad opportunities are also provided by the British Council.

Professional Activities and Organizations

In 1999, working with the Senegal-based RELO, English teachers in Senegal organized ATES—their official TESOL affiliate. This association works with the Ministry of Education's Bureau d'Anglais to recommend, design and host professional English teacher development activities. The activities of the association vary from year to year, but the English Club competition on Goree Island is the grand finale.

Another professional development activity is the annual Saly Seminar hosted by the British Council in the beach resort of Saly. Participants from all over Senegal work together to design teaching materials that are then shared throughout the country. Saly Seminar topics have included using drawings and stories in teaching English, making and using appropriate teaching materials, and learner independence.

If you would like to know more about Senegal or other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, be sure to attend the TESOL 2003's Conference Chair Spotlight Session: *Teaching Language and Culture Through African Eyes*.

Kay Davis, Ph.D., is the Regional English Language Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Dakar, Senegal.

Three Challenges in ESL Assessment

by Carol Chapelle, Iowa State University
Joan Jamieson, Northern Arizona University



Carol A. Chapelle is Professor of TESL/Applied Linguistics at Iowa State University. She is the author of *Computer Applications in Second Language Acquisition: Foundations for Teaching, Testing, and Research* (Cambridge University Press, 2001). Dr. Chapelle is also the editor of *TESOL Quarterly*.



Joan Jamieson received her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is presently a Professor in the Applied Linguistics department at Northern Arizona University. She is the author of several publications on English as a Second Language assessment and computer-assisted language learning.

Anyone involved in language education today recognizes the importance of testing and assessment. At the same time, however, politicians, parents, learners, and teachers all have different perspectives on why tests are so important and what they can be used for. As a consequence, an important part of ESL teachers' expertise includes a more thorough understanding of principles of assessment. However, in articulating those principles, teachers and researchers alike encounter three thorny issues.¹

1. Defining the purpose of a test

Terms such as "placement," "proficiency," and "achievement" might be used in response to a question about what a test is supposed to be used for. These terms may work for the public, but teachers need a more systematic, thorough, and accurate way of considering the purpose of an ESL assessment because the purpose of the assessment is critical for choosing or developing a good test. We think of test purpose as consisting of three interrelated concepts:

- One way to look at test purpose is to consider the *inference* that test users want to make on the basis of test scores. For example, we designed *Longman English Assessment* to allow test users to make an inference about examinees' ESL reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and knowledge of written structures. Making an inference about these three aspects of English ability was one way of looking at the test purpose.
- A second way is to consider the use

of the test results. Typically a test is given because a decision has to be made about examinees, for example, their readiness to study at a university, their eligibility for a job, or the grade that they should receive in a course. *Longman English Assessment* is not intended for any of these relatively high stakes test uses; instead, it is intended to give learners an idea of their level of English ability and to offer level-appropriate advice for improving their English.

- The third aspect of test purpose is any other effect that the test is intended to have, such as serving as a motivating, interesting, and informative experience for learners.

2. Understanding what the test measures

If we say that a test is a measure of reading comprehension, for example, as in the discussion of test inference above, two important questions remain: What do we mean by reading comprehension? What does a specific score on the reading comprehension test indicate about a student's reading comprehension?

The first question has to do with how the test inference is defined. Of course, from a psycholinguist's perspective, many aspects of a reader's linguistic knowledge and processes are called into play during reading comprehension, but from the perspective of language assessment, we try to simplify this somewhat to include the idea that linguistic processing of morphosyntax and the lexicon are required as well as comprehension of rhetorical

¹ In describing these issues, we are using the terms "test" and "assessment" interchangeably because the basic principles we are describing pertain to the full range of what people refer to as tests and assessments.

organization and cohesion across different text types and functions.

The second question has to do with how test performance on the specific test questions relates to what the test taker is actually capable of when reading, for example, an ESL course book. Since we were interested in what the test performance would mean relative to ESL courses, we developed most of *Longman English Assessment* through the use of materials from ESL textbooks, and we defined the types of questions we would ask on the basis of a detailed—but not too detailed—description of what it would take to understand the texts at various levels.

3. Checking on validity

Everyone seems to agree that they want *valid* ESL tests, but as teachers we need to have a clear idea about what this means. In fact, assessment specialists see the expression “valid test” as misleading because it implies that validity is an inherent quality of a test. A test is not in and of itself valid or

invalid; instead, validity refers to the use of a test. For example, a test that we develop to assess ability to use complex sentences in an essay might be valid as part of an achievement test in an ESL writing course. In other words, that test use would be valid. However, if the same test were used to place students into a particular level of reading comprehension, that test use would be recognized as invalid. The test was the same in both cases, but the validity depended on its use.

The idea that *validity refers to test use* is critical because it means that ESL teachers are often the best able to comment on validity relative to their own test programs and classes. However, to do so, it is important that they understand the characteristics of tests that help to increase the validity of their use—characteristics such as reliability and authenticity. In developing *Longman English Assessment*, we were concerned about these test characteristics, but the final

analysis of the validity of its use needs to be based on the teacher's own understanding of these characteristics in view of its use.

These three testing challenges, as well as other questions about what and why we teach the way we do, are magnified when instruction and assessment take place through technology. Because of the commitment of time and resources involved in constructing an online assessment, developers take great care to define the test purpose, interpret the score meaning, and consider evidence concerning the validity of the test. As a consequence, the use of carefully designed materials on the Internet should help teachers to reflect on these three issues in all of the assessments they use.

Find more papers on technology, ESL learning and ESL assessment at www.public.iastate.edu/~carolc.

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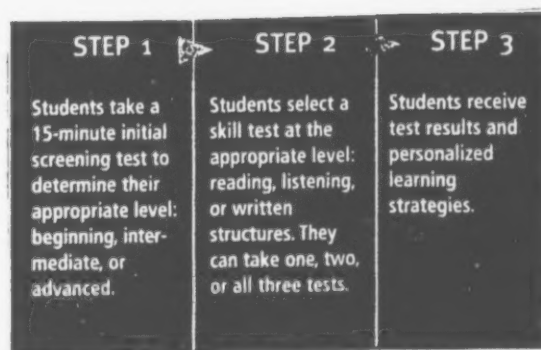
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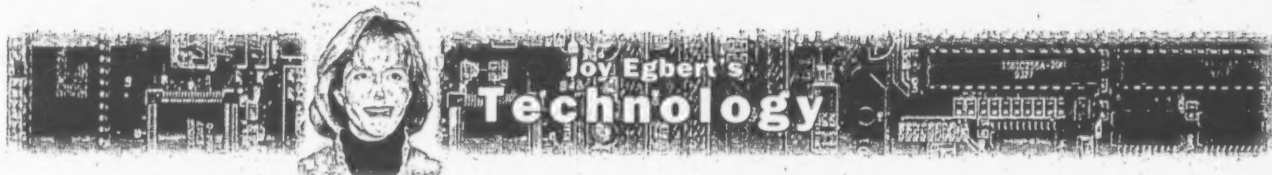
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Using Online News for Critical Reading

BY SUDSUANG YUTDHANA

One important feature of language teaching and learning materials is authenticity—materials should allow students to practice tasks they are likely to encounter outside the classroom. Newspapers are a good source of authentic material widely used by ESL/EFL teachers. In addition to print newspapers, online news can also be used. This is particularly helpful in developing countries, especially in small towns, where there are a limited number of printed English newspapers.

There are many publishers and TV channels providing news online. In most cases, teachers and learners can retrieve some news from these sites for free. One website that offers links to online publishers and TV channels is www.refdesk.com/paper.html. World newspapers and U.S. news archives are available; however, some publishers may require teachers to register to access the site content.

How does the news bring about critical reading?

Since critical readers reflect not only on the content of the text but also on the interpretation of it, the materials selected for developing students' thinking should be open to interpretation. News seems to be an appropriate source for critical reading because students can be encouraged to think about it from various perspectives. Apart from the vocabulary and grammatical aspects of the news, students have opportunities to discuss underlying cultural, political and social aspects of the stories.

Sample Activity

There are many ways to use online news as language-learning material. First, teachers can introduce websites providing news articles to students. Students can go to those websites during class or prior to class and choose a news article. The students can be assigned to read the article and write their own thoughts about the news before they come to class.

In class, the students can work in groups and take turns telling other members in the group about the content of the article or story and their own views on it, supporting their perspective with various forms of evidence. Group members may ask questions or add more ideas about the news.

After working in groups, the students can rewrite their own perspectives on the news, mentioning ideas from the group. Students may not agree with every idea raised during the discussion, so the teacher can ask them to write about the reasons that they agree or disagree. In intermediate and advanced classes, students can discuss the tone and biases of the writing.

Conclusion

There are a number of benefits to using online news sources in English classes. During activities in which authentic, online news sources are included, students can practice their language learning skills together with critical thinking. In addition, students learn about different views of their world and explore up-to-date content. Since students do not interact through the computer but as a result of information found there, connection speed and other technological concerns are not barriers to using the news for language learning and teaching. Finally, learners can also practice listening critically with audio reports from Internet sites such as the BBC or CNN.

Guest columnist Sudsuang Yutdhana is a teacher in the Department of Languages, Naresuan University, Thailand. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in English Language Studies at Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand, and a visiting scholar at Washington State University.



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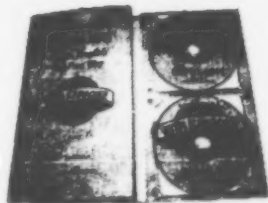
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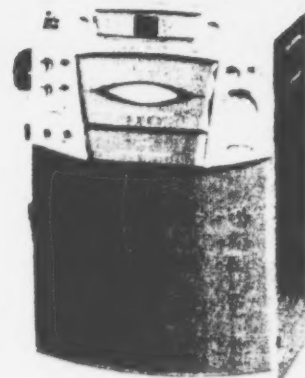
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Online English Engaging for Adult Learners

BY STEPHAINE HOGAN

Longman English Online

by Michael Rost

Longman English Success,

a division of Pearson Longman ESL, 2001

Longman English Online (www.startLES.com) is an online course for adults who want interactive practice in general English. Created by Longman English Success, a division of Pearson Education, Longman English Online is a four-level, multi-media course designed for both classroom use and self-study in ESL and EFL programs.

After signing up for the course, students receive a CD-ROM, username and password. Students begin by downloading the program from a CD-ROM, which automatically checks to make sure that necessary tools such as Adobe Acrobat Reader and plug-ins such as Macromedia Flash, Quick Time and Shockwave are installed. The CD also assists in downloading missing or incomplete programs. After completing the program download, students must then connect to the Internet.

Once online, students are directed to a sign-in page and the Student Home page that has a menu of learning tools, a teacher's message board, an assignment board and links to the "Course Home" and "Continue Course" features.

New students can select the "Course Home" link, which has an orientation with native language support in nine languages and is printable through Adobe Acrobat. This link also provides a course overview, which contains an outline of the entire course and a link that introduces the main characters seen throughout the course. Once students are familiar with the course format, they can go directly to the units by clicking on the "Continue Course" link.

Longman English Online Level 1 is arranged into three modules, each with five units. Every unit has a Unit Home page with a pop-up window explaining the unit learning objectives. The Unit Home page also lists the exercises in the four basic language skills—reading, writing, listening and speaking—as well as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation in a content integrated structure.

Practice exercises include self-checking multiple-choice and drop and drag, as well as exercises that have

more than one possible answer. Students receive immediate feedback upon completing an exercise and are encouraged to try again, if necessary. Some assignments, such as the writing exercises, need to be posted on the Student Home page, where students can use the assignment board to track their progress. Supplementary online and offline activities are easily accessible from the Unit Home page and each unit includes a listening challenge, a summary of the points learned in the unit and a review quiz.

Overall, the course is very engaging for adults who want to learn general English. There are several strong features of the course. The first is the navigation. The placement of various features throughout the course is very consistent. This is important for both students and teachers who need to reference certain features from wherever they may be in the program. The design of the program is also clean and appealing. This combination of easy navigation

and good design helps users with little computer experience quickly feel comfortable using the online course environment. The course content is thorough and well-integrated throughout all the different media of the program.

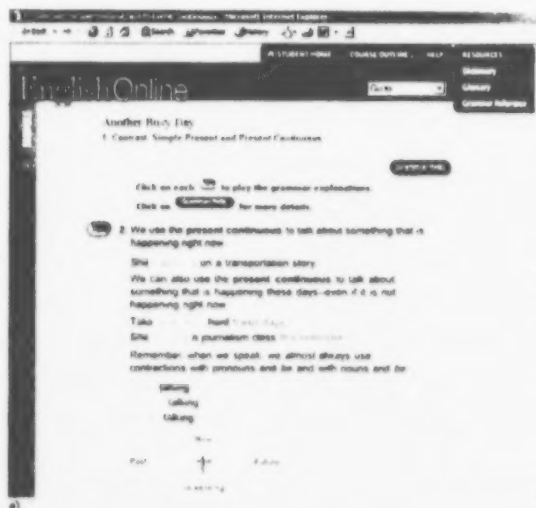
One handy feature is the interactive Online Teacher's Guide. This guide includes a curriculum that can help direct teachers in selecting appropriate activities to support learner success.

The course would be improved with an expansion of native language support in the exercise instructions, objectives and the Longman English

Assessment Review Class, an interactive evaluation tool linked to the program. This would lower students' anxiety, especially when beginning the course. The course may not be accessible to all potential users as it is not available on Netscape Communicator or a Mac platform at this time, but this is by far the minority of users. Also, the user needs to make sure they have enough memory to support the program.

The cost of English Online Level 1 with instructor Tools is \$150 per student. Levels 2-4 with Instructor Tools are \$130 per student per level.

Stephaine Hogan is a doctoral student in educational technology/CALL at Washington State University, Pullman.



How Perfect is the Present Perfect?

Dear Richard:

I'm having a running debate with a colleague of mine. Please look at this mini-dialogue:

A: Did you finish that project?

B: No, not yet.

I say that the question posed by Person A is fine; my colleague says it isn't. She says it should be *Have you finished that project?* I don't say that her version is wrong, but I don't think mine is either. She insists that only hers is right. Can you be our referee?

—Norman Jackman, Houston, TX

Dear Norman,

I've heard others debate this point, too. Your colleague wouldn't be British by any chance, would she? The British tend to be very strict about when the present perfect should be used as opposed to the simple past. Their reasoning is that the present perfect is used when the activity in question is very recent or still influencing the present. If Person A asks the question *Have you finished that project?*, you know that the project started in the past but might still be going on. Person B's response, *No, not yet*, confirms the fact that the project is still connected to the present since it isn't finished. The simple past, the British say, means the activity was in the past, is finished, and has no connection to the present.

There's nothing wrong with that thinking, but we in North America tend not to be so strict about this differentiation in American English. So, for colloquial American speech, it's perfectly acceptable these days to ask *Did you finish that project?* In other words, Norman, as far as American English goes, you're right in saying that both forms are okay, and your colleague is not quite right in refusing to accept the alternative form of using the simple past.

Dear Grammar Guy:

My student wanted to know why she heard somebody use the preposition *over* in the sentence *We drove over to Putney*. She said, "Isn't it right to say, 'We drove to Putney?'" Why do we need to use *over*? I know we don't "need" to use *over*, but I couldn't figure this out. Please help! (By the way, I love your column!)

—Stumped, Brattleboro, VT

Dear Stumped:

Thanks for the compliment! Many native speakers use the preposition *over* to communicate proximity. If we say *We drove to Putney*, there's no way of knowing whether Putney is nearby or far away. If we say *We drove over to Putney*, the native listener immediately understands that Putney must be relatively nearby. If you try it out, you'll see how it only works with the places that are relatively close. If I'm in Miami, I couldn't say *I'm flying over to Chicago*, but I could say *I'm flying over to Nassau* (in the Bahamas, which is fairly close to Miami).

Here's the answer to the last "Food for Thought" question: What group of nouns seems to break the rules regard-

ing countable and uncountable nouns? Peggy Konecki of Middletown, NY wrote: "Some nouns that have to do with food and drink. For example, ESOL books say that *coffee*, *tea* and *beer* are uncountable and require a quantifier *cup of* or *bottle of*. Yet you'll often hear people say they'd like a *beer* or *two coffees*. I remember when a word like *fruit* was considered noncount, but you often hear *a fruit*, *two fruits*, etc. I think these words have crossed the line because it's easier and faster to say them in the plural and use them as count nouns, especially high-frequency words."

Great answer, Peggy! In fact, in *The ELT Grammar Book: A Teacher-Friendly Reference Guide*, I label these nouns "fast-food English."

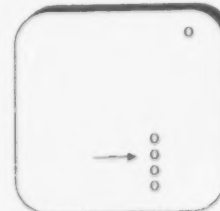
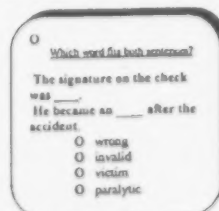
And here's the "Food for Thought" question for this issue. Send in your answers as soon as possible. We can say *I heard her sing* and *I heard her singing*. We can say *I saw the cars crash* but not *I saw the cars crashing*. Why not?

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Technical Education Center in Miami, FL. ESL.GrammarGuy@aol.com

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CREATING PLACEMENT TESTS

BY JOEL MURRAY

Many educators around the world find themselves in growing schools or programs with more and more students needing placement into appropriate classes. Many schools use tests that are intended for other purposes—e.g., the Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP) Test, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or the Michigan. However, these can be inaccurate for placing students in classes. Some schools have no placement procedures, and students are assigned to classes haphazardly.

Many ESL/EFL teachers face the task of creating placement tests despite their lack of experience with testing beyond the tests they give in their own classrooms. Many educators don't know how to begin or proceed in creating placement tests that yield results that are reliable (i.e., that are consistent from one administration of the test to another), valid (i.e., that measure what you want them to measure and not something else) and accurate (i.e., that place students into the appropriate levels with little or no error). There are several important steps to creating good placement tests.

Assemble an Assessment Team

The first step in creating a placement test is assembling an assessment team composed of parties interested in the placement process. The concerns of individual stakeholders should be addressed to help define the purpose of the test and make decisions about it. The assessment team should include administrators responsible for students and the curriculum, coordinators responsible for implementing

the curriculum, and teachers representing a cross-section of classes. The team should also include one element that is often missing in the design of placement tests: the test-takers themselves. As Bradshaw (1990, 27) notes, "there seems to be no reason why some degree of collection of test-takers' and test-users' reactions cannot be included as part of the design of any new test."



Focus on the Test-Takers

Once the assessment team has been assembled, they should describe or characterize the test-takers who will be taking the placement test. Characteristics taken into account should be those relevant to the test-takers' identity and cultural background: age, gender, first language, country of origin, place of residence, languages already learned, current stage of learning, reasons for taking

the test or for entering the school, personal and professional interests, and amount of background knowledge. Describing the test-takers can help with the choice of appropriate test material and test techniques.

Define the Test Objectives

After the test-takers have been characterized, the objectives for the placement test should be outlined using the

following questions: What is the aim of the test? What should be tested? Why? How should it be tested? These questions can be answered by looking at the curriculum, the students, the type of classes, and so on. Hughes (1989, 48) has stated that this stage is essential "to make oneself perfectly clear about what it is one wants to know and for what purpose."

Choose a Test Type

The objectives having been defined, the team should decide the type of placement test to be used and what it should contain. First, should the test be direct or indirect or a combination of the two? Direct testing requires the test-taker to perform the skill to be measured (e.g., having test-takers write something in order to see how well they write) while indirect testing measures something dependent upon an underlying skill (e.g., having test-takers answer multiple-choice comprehension questions to see how well they have understood something to which they have listened).

Second, should the test be discrete point or integrative? Discrete point testing involves testing one thing at a time, item by item, (e.g., a multiple-choice grammar test on the present perfect) while integrative test-

ing involves testing the combination of many elements in the completion of a task (e.g., a test involving the writing of a grammatically accurate, well-planned, unified, cohesive paragraph). The distinction between discrete point and integrative testing is, according to Hughes (1989, 17), "not unrelated to that between indirect and direct testing," with discrete point tests being almost always indirect, and integrative tests direct.

Finally, should the test be norm- or criterion-referenced? A norm-referenced test is one in which the amount of knowledge or material known by each test-taker is compared with that known by other test-takers, with the aim of spreading the test-takers out along a continuum of general abilities or proficiencies so that differences among them are reflected in the scores (Brown 1995), while a criterion-based test is one in which the assessment of the amount of knowledge or material known by each test-taker is compared with a level of achievement or a set of criteria.

Which type of test should one choose? Unfortunately, the answer is not always straightforward and depends upon what is to be included in the test. First, for placement tests involving speaking and writing, direct testing is best because these two productive skills provide something that can be directly observed and measured—utterances and written material. For placement tests involving listening and reading, indirect testing should be used as these two receptive skills yield something that can neither be directly observed nor measured but can only be inferred—comprehension of an utterance or a reading passage.

Second, because of the relationship between direct/indirect testing and discrete/integrative testing, for tests involving grammar or listening, discrete point testing should be used. The rationale for this recommendation is that the underlying ability—grammatical structure or listening comprehension—is difficult to test efficiently by other means. The ability is thus best assessed by breaking it down into its individual elements, such as knowledge of the past progressive or the understanding of the gist of a lecture, and by assessing enough of these elements to indicate the test-taker's underlying ability. For

speaking or writing, integrative testing is best because the successful completion of the speaking or writing task—making a comprehensible utterance or writing a sentence—does not lend itself well to being broken down and the sum of a number of individual elements may not represent the whole of the ability. For tests involving reading, a combination of discrete point and integrative testing is best, as the underlying ability—understanding a written passage—is difficult to assess accurately by using exclusively one or the other form of measurement. This ability is thus best evaluated both by separating it into components (by, for example, having multiple-choice questions that focus on reference words, vocabulary in context, and the like) and by using a combination of elements (by, for example, requiring the test-taker to write a summary or a paraphrase of the passage).

Finally, the placement test should be a norm-referenced test, for norm-referenced tests, as stated earlier, compare what is known by each test-taker with that known by other test-takers. Because, according to theory, most scores should be close to the average with fewer scores out near the periphery (think of the bell curve here), norm-referenced tests will allow you to define distinct levels of performance and to make distinctions between individual performances (McNamara 2000, 63)—exactly what a placement test should do. In order for a placement test to be norm-referenced, the test has to be normed; that is, it must be trialed with a representative population of test-takers in order to obtain the scores representative of each level of placement at an institution or in an educational situation. Once that is done, the results can be used to set cut-off points (the lower and upper end of ranges of scores) that will allow students to be placed at different levels.

Choose Test Content

Concerning what the placement test should contain, it seems logical that the test should reflect the curriculum of the school, yet in practice this has not always been the case. As Brown (1989, 66) remarked, "we decided to develop a placement battery that would be related in content to the cur-

riculum of our institute—a proposal that struck us as strangely novel." Nonetheless, the answers to a number of questions can help determine what should be included in a placement test:

- How many sections should the test contain?
- How long should the sections be?
- How should the sections be differentiated?
- How many items should there be in each section?
- What is the target situation for the test and how could it be simulated?
- What text types (written and/or spoken) should be chosen?
- What language skills should be tested?
- What aspects of the language should be tested?
- What tasks should be required?
- What test methods should be used?
- What is the curriculum of the classes into which the placement test is placing test-takers?

Create the Test

Once the test type and content have been chosen, the test itself can be created. The test questions should be carefully crafted: the questions should be as easy as possible for the test-takers to understand and process. Unnecessarily complex questions only increase the cognitive load on the test-takers and do nothing to contribute to measuring what you seek to measure. In addition, tests should be relatively short—not too long for the test-takers to answer nor too long for the scorers to mark.

Develop Scoring Guides

After the test is created, scoring guides should be developed. These guides are intended for the markers of the placement test to help them assess test-takers' performance reliably and consistently. Of course, scoring guides are not necessary for multiple-choice questions, which simply require an answer key. Rather, scoring guides are applicable to subjective or open-ended questions—for example, those requiring short essay answers or oral interaction. Scoring guides can be either holistic or analytical, with holistic meaning that one score is

assigned to an answer (e.g., a mark out of 10), analytic meaning that separate scores for a number of different aspects are assigned to an answer (e.g., a mark out of 10 for grammar, 10 for content, and 10 for structure, for a total of 30 marks).

Each type of scoring guide has a number of advantages and disadvantages. One advantage of holistic scoring is that it can be quick for the markers. Two disadvantages are the fact that the scoring scale must be well conceived and that there should be more than one scorer in order to ensure reliability. There are at least two advantages of analytical scoring: markers have to consider certain aspects of the test-taker's performance that they might otherwise overlook and the results can be used for diagnostic purposes. One disadvantage is that analytical marking is time-consuming. The type of scoring guide that should be used depends on each testing situation. If time is not at a premium, analytical scoring is the better choice.

Test the Test

Having created the scoring guide, the placement test itself should be tested. In other words, before the test is implemented, it should be trialed with a set of students who are representative of the "real" test-takers. The trial will probably reveal problems with the test that could not be identified during its creation. For example, too many items on the test may be too difficult or too easy, open-ended test items may confuse test-takers, writing tasks may result in less response than expected because of poor or somehow insufficient wording, or multiple-choice items may be ambiguous or open to disagreement.

The results of the trial should be analyzed. For multiple-choice test items, you should calculate the facility value (the level of difficulty of each test item) and the discrimination index (the ability of each item to discriminate between test-takers who did well and those who did not). For advice on how to do so, see Alderson et al. (1995, 80-86), Hughes (1989, 161-162) or Harrison (1983, 127-133). For open-ended or subjective items, you should decide whether the items resulted in what you intended and whether the scoring guide, if applicable, is serviceable. Analyzing

ESL Magazine's Online Poll

What test does your program use to place students in appropriate ESL/EFL classes?

52% Placement tests created by and for your program.

40% Off-the-shelf tests.

8% Other means besides testing.

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the results should yield important information about the test items and the test itself. For instance, if certain test items are too easy, they should perhaps be discarded or moved toward the beginning of the test. If others are too difficult, perhaps they should be re-worded or moved toward the end of the test.

Train the Testers

Once the results of the trial have been analyzed and the test has been altered accordingly, the people who are going to administer and score the placement test should be trained. The test administrators, who may be support people but not educators, should receive instruction in delivering the test consistently and correctly with little or no variation from administration to administration. Alderson, Clapham, and Wall (1995, 115) maintain that it is important that "[test] administrators understand the nature of the test they will be conducting, the importance of their own role and the possible conse-

quences for candidates if the administration is not carried out correctly." Scorers should be provided with scoring guides and opportunities to calibrate their assessments of subjective test items. Weir (1990, 86) believes that this step is important, noting that "considerable attention should...be paid to the development of relevant and adequate scoring criteria and examiners must be trained and standardized in the use of these."

In conclusion, creating a placement test does not have to be an intimidating or overwhelming task for those instructors who have little or no experience in testing. By following the suggestions listed here, you should be able to create a placement test that is reliable, valid and accurate.

Joel Murray, B.A., M.A., wrote his M.A. thesis on placement testing and teaches academic ESL at Kwantlen University College, Canada's largest public university college serving Vancouver, B.C., and its suburbs.

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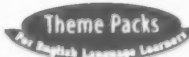
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EVOLUTION: It's Not Just For Biology

BY RICHARD FIRSTEN

I'm 56 years old. Now, that may sound old to some of you, but in the timeline of the English language, those years are no more than a fleeting moment. Yet, in that short time span, I've witnessed amazing changes in what is considered acceptable or unacceptable in English grammar and vocabulary. This can be tough on English teachers, whether they teach English to native speakers or to speakers of other languages. Some changes have been going on gradually for quite some time; others have taken place rather quickly and dramatically, but then, that has been the course of our language for the past thousand years.

What Changes Are Taking Place

Let me mention a few examples of change. In grammar, it's now acceptable to use postponed prepositions as in *I don't know what you're referring to* as opposed to *I don't know to what you're referring*. Few people grimace nowadays when they hear or read an infinitive being split, such as in *We're here to better serve you* rather than *We're here to serve you better*. Do you shriek when you realize that adverbs in certain positions are quickly disappearing? Take, for example, the phrase *fresh baked bread* that has replaced *freshly baked bread*. How about the use of *there's* or *where's* or *here's* even if the subject that follows is a plural, as in *There's at least five people waiting to see you* or *Here's three good reasons to do this* rather than *There are at least five people waiting to see you* and *Here are three good reasons to do this*.

But I'm not through—not by a long shot. I bet you've heard such superlative forms as *the handsomest* and *the commonest* instead of *the most*

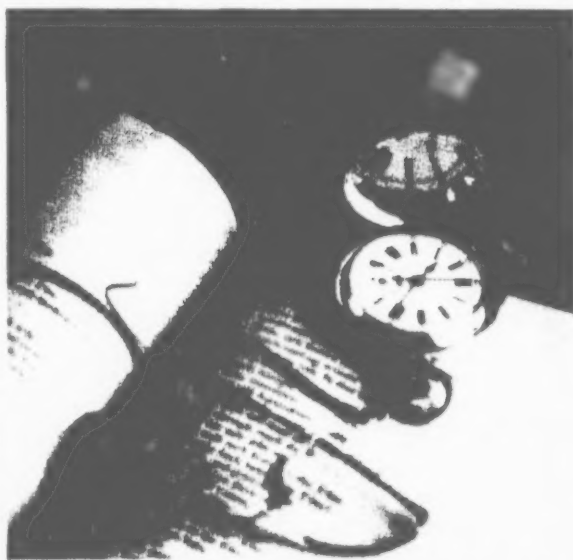
handsome and *the most common*. Then there are examples like *If I would have known you needed money*, *I would have lent you some* rather than *If I had known you needed money*, *I would have lent you some* and *It's important that he's here by 9 a.m.* rather than *It's important that he be here by 9 a.m.* And even though some might consider this stylistic rather than grammatical, people use the phrase *the reason why* instead of *the reason that* all the time.

And what about vocabulary? The most notable changes in this area are changes in register (spoken language)

for a woman to say publicly that she was pregnant; a woman was *having a baby*.

Still in the realm of vocabulary, we're all very conscious—or should be—of the “politically correct” changes that have come about both in racial and gender issues. We've gone from *Negro* to *black* to *African-American*; we've turned from *Spanish* as an all-encompassing label to *Hispanic* or *Latino*; and now *Oriental* is *Asian*. There are no more *mailmen*, *firemen*, *stewardesses*, *actresses*, or *waitresses*. Now they're *letter carriers*, *firefighters*, *flight attendants*, *actors*, and *servers*. (It's interesting to note that although *server* is the preferred term used in restaurants all across the United States these days, it still has not been adopted into all ESOL texts.) Moreover, what used to be clearly distinct countable and uncountable nouns aren't so distinct at times anymore: *Two coffees, please*.

The point is, not only do fauna and flora go through evolution, but so do languages. One doesn't need to be a rocket scientist to figure this out. Just pick up a copy of *Beowulf* or Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* or listen to a play by Shakespeare and you realize immediately that today's English ain't what it used to be. Many of the changes that English has gone through have made life a lot easier for those who speak it and those who teach it. We no longer need to spend time dealing with noun or adjective declensions (except in the personal pronouns, where they still have a foothold as in *he*, *his* and *him*), nor do we have to suffer through memorizing many forms of a verb in each and every tense or aspect as is still the case in just



and key (written language), which reflect changes in our cultural and societal attitudes towards various subjects. Just a few years ago, it would have been unthinkable to hear such words as *hell* or *damn* on a television network, but now these words are commonplace along with other previously taboo words, especially on shows such as *NYPD Blue*. *Darn* was about as strong as an exclamation could get on TV when I was growing up. And I still remember quite well when it would have been an outrage

about all other languages. For us, it's all boiled down to one little change in one little tense, the third person singular in the simple present with the addition of that *-s* or *-es*—even though our students still have trouble remembering to use it!

Responding to Change

I have noticed an interesting phenomenon whenever I speak to seasoned teachers of English grammar. For the most part, they tend to be purists, that is, linguistic reactionaries who bristle at the very idea that such changes as I have already spotlighted could become acceptable English. I understand and sympathize with their viewpoint perfectly and have to admit that there are times when I find myself feeling irritated when I hear some of these changes, especially if used by educated speakers. It's only natural to feel that way. Language is a very personal thing. It becomes part of our identity, on a personal level as well as on a national level. And when something becomes so personal, we don't like it tampered with. So when I find myself reacting as a purist, I catch myself, take a deep breath, and remember that I am just witnessing what has been going on in English for the past millennium. "It's nothing new," I reassure myself. "It's just the natural process of evolution taking place in language all around me."

Changes That Last

Then I always ask myself, "How do I know if what I'm hearing is just a momentary aberration in the language or if it is indeed a real change, a 'mutation,' so to speak?" One test that seems to work is the test of time. Lots of lexical items come and go with every generation. In fact, many generations are recognized in part by the idiomatic expressions or single vocabulary items that were popularized during their time. When Americans hear phrases like *She's the cat's meow* (She's very attractive) or *23 skidoo* (Get out of here), most will recognize these as expressions popular during the 1920s. When I hear someone use an expression like *I can dig it* (I understand) or *That's groovy* (That's nice), I get all "misty" and nostalgic since those were phrases popular during my college years, the 1960s. But then I need to ask myself, "Have those expressions become part of the stan-

dard language? Are they taught as 'regular' English?" And the answer has to be, "No, they're not." They were indeed aberrations that helped give a uniqueness to their eras, but they have fallen by the linguistic wayside and now seem more like curious oddities of the language than anything else. They did not become standardized or accepted by the general population as regularly used phrases to be taught to future generations.

Another test that works well is whether or not the change is in the register or in the key, in other words, is the change only taking place in the spoken language and only in certain social situations, or is it happening in the written language as well? Many grammatical "mutations" and lexical items may arise and be used in the popular vernacular, but never make it into the written language. That is because historically the spoken language changes much faster than the written language, which tends to be much more conservative. So it is when you find educated people using a grammatical mutation or new lexical item consistently in the written language that you can begin to believe you are witnessing a real development in the evolution of the language.

I remember how I used to be so

bothered by hearing educated speakers say *there's* followed by a plural subject. I would even mumble under my breath, "There ARE, not there is!" But then I started noticing *there's* with a plural appearing in all sorts of written items: memos, letters, newspaper and magazine articles. I actually started cutting them out and saving them just to see how often this mutation popped up. Much to my amazement, it popped up a great deal; so much so that I have finally had to admit there is a good likelihood that the day will come when grammar teachers will tell their students it is all right to use *there's* followed by a singular or a plural subject.

And it won't be the first time this kind of thing has happened. I used my pair of scissors every time I came across the use of the indefinite article *an* when it came before the adjectives *historical* or *hysterical*. The rule is perfectly clear: We use *a* if the following word begins with a consonant sound and *an* if the next word begins with a vowel sound. Well, the last time I looked into the matter, *h* was still a consonant, and yet I had quite a pile of cut-outs from all kinds of written sources containing *an historical* this or *an hysterical* that. This, too, began with my hearing the usage in the spoken language, even by the most well

English Declensions

This is what one of the English declensions used to look like. Let's take the noun *horse*, which in Old English was *hors* and, believe it or not, wasn't considered masculine or feminine, but neuter:

Singular

nominative (subject):	hors
genitive (possessive):	horses
dative (indirect object):	horse
accusative (direct object):	hors
instrumental:	horse

Plural

nominative:	hors
genitive:	horsa
dative:	horsum
accusative:	hors
instrumental:	horsum

English Conjugations

This is what one of the English conjugations used to look like. Let's take the verb *to drive*, which in Old English was *drifan*, and was considered a "strong" verb because of its internal change to form the simple past rather than the addition of the dental suffix. [Pronunciation Notes: *ic* is pronounced "itch"; *ð* = "th"; "e" is always pronounced "ay"; the initial "g" followed by "e" = "y"; and an "f" between two vowels = "v." It's interesting that Old English was written very phonetically.]

Present Tense

Singular	Plural
ic drife	we drifað
ðu drifest	ge drifað
he, heo, hit drifeð	hie drifað

Past Tense

Singular	Plural
ic draf	we drifon
ðu draf	ge drifon
he, heo, hit draf	hie drifon

known television journalists, but then it started appearing more and more in the written language as well. To me this means that a change is most likely taking place, and will become acceptable sometime in the future.

Here's another example. The rule used to be that we use *each other* for two persons or groups and *one another* for three or more persons or groups. Does that hold up these days? Not at all. The two phrases are used interchangeably all the time and practically nobody takes notice of this fact.

Whom used to always be the object form of *who* (another throwback to the declensions of old), but now we pooh-poo the object form except when teaching for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or if we have students who are learning a higher register for formal business writing and the like.

A great distinction was once made between using *may* for permission and *can* for ability. Now they, too, have become interchangeable for the most part. Yes, many people still consider *may* a more formal way, a higher register, to ask for permission, but only the rare person would shudder if *can*

were used in its place. And the list goes on and on.

What's a Teacher To Do?

All of this can prove to be very irritating to English teachers, no matter who their students are. We teachers like things to be as uncomplicated and rule-governed as possible to make our jobs easier. And why shouldn't we? But the fact remains that our language is anything but stagnant; it keeps evolving as any living, breathing entity does, and we have to accept that fact. It's not that I have reached the point of saying that anything goes—we still have a rule-governed language to teach, thank goodness—but I incorporate additional information in my lesson planning to take into account those changing grammatical forms and lexical items that seem to be taking hold. I don't necessarily teach the new items actively to my students, but I don't go about my business as if they don't exist. What's that saying? Oh, yes: "Denial isn't just a river in Egypt."

I'll give my traditional lessons on countable and uncountable nouns, but then I'll clue my students in on the

fact that there is something I call "fast food English" (Firsten 2001) in which some so-called uncountable nouns get counted, like *coffee*, *tea* and *beer*. Admit it: Don't you think it would sound very funny to hear a couple of guys walk up to the bar and ask the bartender for *two glasses of beer* or *two bottles of beer* instead of *two beers*? I know I would!

The moral of this story is that we may not like change in the language, but it is something we need to come to terms with and make our students aware of. As long as we clearly make the distinction for them between what is standard English and what is possibly in the midst of change, we're doing our jobs very well. And that's what it's all about, isn't it?

Richard Firsten is an ESL instructor, teacher trainer and author specializing in grammar and methodology. He currently teaches at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida.

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New Websites for ESL Employment

So long. Farewell. *Auf Wiedersehen*. Goodnight. Oddly enough, those are the words that popped into my head as I pondered this, my last column. Unlike Maria (et al), thankfully, I am not being chased off.

For the past three and a half years I have had the pleasure of sharing some of my knowledge with you and receiving some of your knowledge in return. I've also had the good luck to be able to write for the fine folks at *ESL Magazine*. It has been an enriching experience, and I hope that I have offered some words of worth.

Why "retire" when you have a column writing for the preeminent magazine in ESL/EFL circles? Good question. Quite simply, it is a matter of time. As work responsibilities have taken up additional time and as my children have begun to do that thing that they do so well (grow up, that is), time has become more finite, if that were possible. The unique needs of my family (which includes three children; two of them from Ethiopia, and one of those two being profoundly deaf) and my own needs (my second book will be released this spring, and I have a contract for a third with a

different publisher) ultimately had to take priority over other quite important relationships.

Not to leave you in a lurch, without resources, utterly alone, I've recently come across a couple of new websites. Tom Riedmiller's excellent "The Internet Job Search for ESL" provides links to all of the very best ESL jobs pages. It is located at <http://www.uni.edu/riedmill/>. A newer resource, [ESLFocus.com](http://www.ESLFocus.com), has quickly become an important asset to the ESL/EFL community by providing not only access to position announcements, but also informational articles on teaching locations and techniques.

In the words of that famous American poet, Roy Rogers, "Happy trails to you until we meet again."

Thomas Nixon is the co-author of Bears' Guide to the Best Education Degrees by Distance Learning (Ten Speed Press). He can be reached at mixon@cvip.net.

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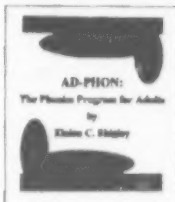
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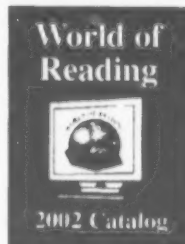
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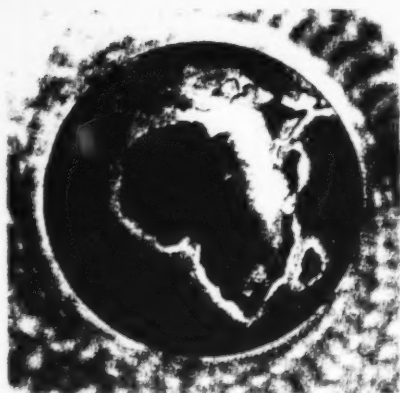
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